CHICAGO USERS GROUP

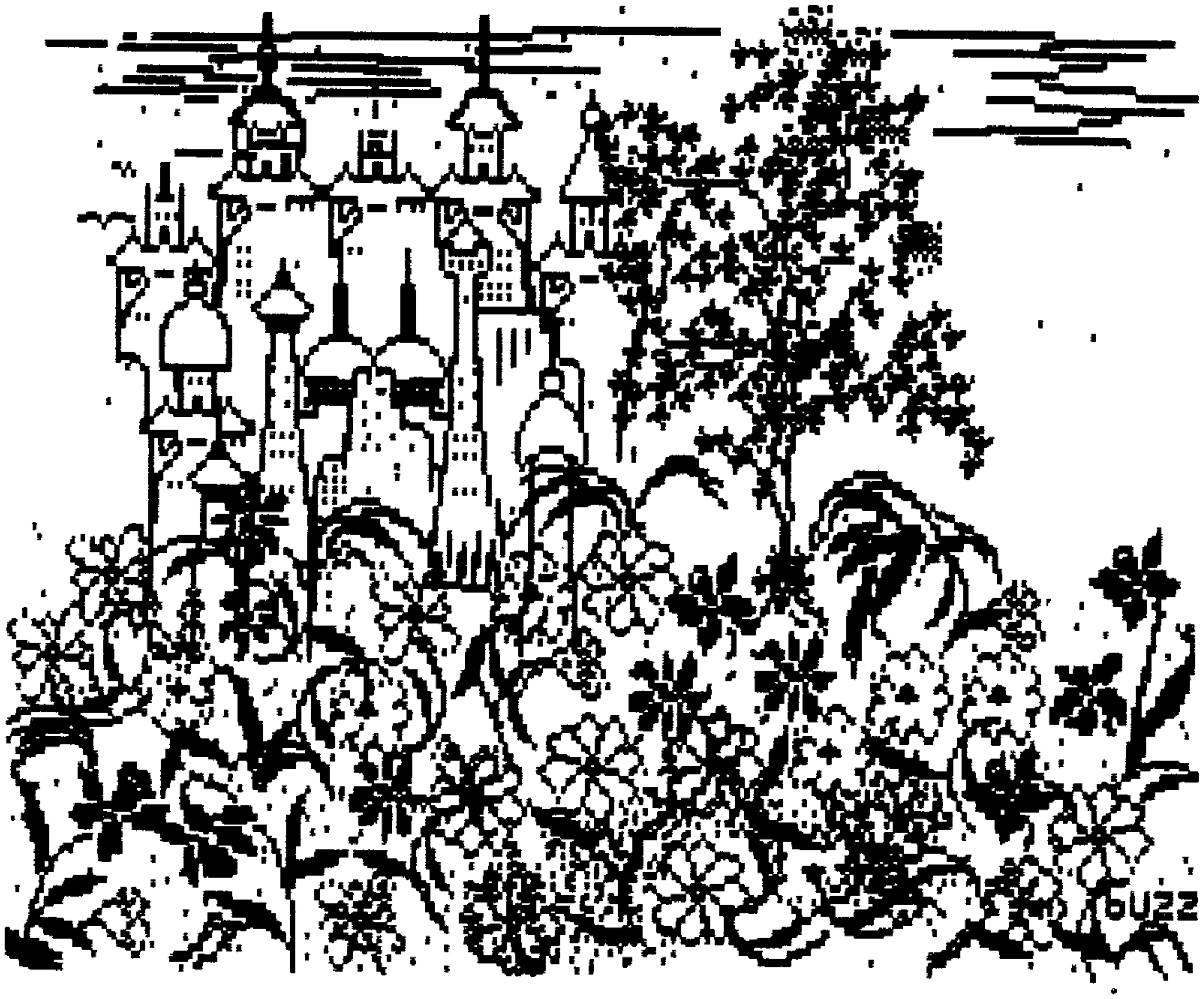
PRESENTS

CHICAGO TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE CHICAGO TI-99/4A USERS GROUP

5TH ANNUAL CHICAGO TI FAIRE COVERAGE
PICTURES INSIDE

NOV. 30, 1987
EDITOR: Carole Goldstein



THE DECEMBER MEETING- - - -

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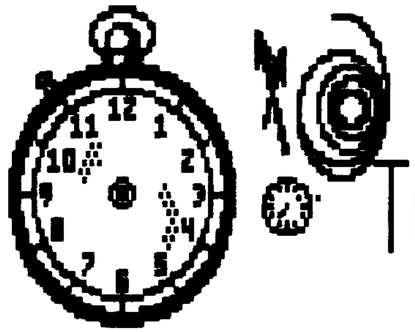
COVER ARTWORK BY BUZZ KRANTZI
Contributing artists: Buzz Krantz, Dan Gronowski, Danny Goldstein and Anne Dhein
Photography by Gary Cox and Rich Klein
Thanks to Dennis Hathaway for his proofreading expertise.

BULLETINS:

UG HOT LINE NUMBER IS (312)657-1093.

The Chicago TImes is published 10 TImes a year, monthly, except during June and July. Chicago TImes is not affiliated with Texas Instruments in any way and is supported only by its subscribers and advertisers. Subscriptions are free with membership in the Chicago TI99/4A User's Group. The Chicago TImes is also distributed free to any other User's Group that wishes to reciprocate. Articles contained herein may be re-printed by another User's Group Publication provided credit is given to the Chicago TImes as the original source of the article. Comments and letters are welcome, as is the submission of original articles and programs.



THE DISASSEMBLY

Dave Wakely

The Faire; the problems; the plans; the election; other ThIngs:

The crowds came. The vendors sold. The dogs barked and the caravan moved on. All in all, it was another successful TI Faire for the Chicago TI-99/4A Users' Group. We either tied or exceeded the number of vendors at last year's show, depending on how you count, and the attendees purchased large amounts of hardware and software, as usual. There were demonstrations and seminars all day (literally), and everyone connected with putting on the show was bone tired by the end of the two days (three if they went to Milwaukee).

The "caravan" I mentioned is in reference to the center of TI activity moving on to another Faire, held somewhere else. For November 7, 1987, we were the center of activity for the TI world, and it seemed as though everyone of importance in that world was here. The "name" programmers, vendors, and software house "entrepreneurs" were all in attendance, exchanging the latest rumors and news of just what's happening. After five years of practice, we now have it all down pat.

Faire coordinator Don Jones did yeoman service in putting on our most ambitious Faire yet, with excellent facilities and a near flawless execution. There are always little "surprises" in an undertaking this large, but everything seemed to work. By the opening at 9 AM the vendors were set to go. Len Rovner and his Door Crew got everyone properly processed in, and personally, I was amazed that the tightly scheduled presentations in the Fireside Lounge all apparently came off on or near their appointed times. Not long after the closing at 6 PM the floor was cleared and many went to the dinner.

The various Faires, including our own "granddaddy" are a sort of barometer of the health of the TI world, and it appears that this orphan child will continue to survive, despite the mixed metaphors of its various commentators. In fact, it is getting to the point where it can be argued that the Faires are now an important and integral part of the continued viability of the machine. It just has to be heartening to the programmers and owners of software houses who come to these things to be able to say, "Yes, there really are lots of TI owners out there who like, use, and support my products". Perhaps without the Faires it would not always be so evident. Beyond the money, beyond the numbers, our Faire and the others like it provide an emotional "shot in the arm" to the TI community. On that basis, this recent innoculation has once again warded off the illnesses of disuse and disinterest in the TI-99/4A.

PROBLEMS, WHAT PROBLEMS?: At the Faire could also be heard some disturbing rumblings, however, and the occasion of the Faire, with its generally good news, provides the cushion to allow some reflection on them. Perhaps it

is when we are feeling our strongest that we can most directly confront our problems. As an example, I overheard several references to problems other groups are having. As a case in point, just a few years ago the Washington DC Users' Group was probably the largest in the country, with over 1,000 members. I heard an unsubtantiated comment that it is now down to about 200, and that similar losses have been noted by other groups. This is most alarming. We have been somewhat shielded from this in Chicago ever since the group decided to advertise for members on a national level. We are now at the point where the majority of our 700+ membership is from outside the Chicago area, sometimes way outside the Chicago area. At the Faire there were two individuals from Holland, and another from Australia. That is wonderful on the face of it, but at the same time troubling.

Yes, we have a lot to offer the TI user, from this newsletter to the library, but this also means that many of these people can't get similar service locally. At one time I recall that TI claimed there were over 200 recognized 99/4A groups. Since then, I wonder how many have folded up and gone out of existence because of declining membership? Also, while our size has increased, the number who attend our monthly meetings has not substantially changed in three years. All this is evidence of, and I might as well say it, the dreaded CS (Closeting Syndrome). What can be done about this? There are a number of threads in the TI world, which when taken together (but in no special order) reveal the picture in tapestry:

Thread 1: Full page ads in MICROpendium are fine for increasing our membership nationally, but these are not the people who have to be reached. Neither is it those "former" TI users. Did those who packed up their TIs simply stop using computers? Did Philco users stop listening to the radio? Did Studebaker users stop driving? Not a chance. Many are now using IBM or clones, and some are probably using Atari STs, Commodore Amigas, etc. Many probably look back on their 99/4As with fondness, as the system which got them started in computing, much like a "classic car" owner keeps his Hupmobile polished in the garage, taking it out for the annual Veteran's Day Parade. Perhaps the old TI users even haul it out now and then for a quick game of Parsec or whatever before working up a speadsheet on an AT clone. Can these closet users be enticed to take out the console, somehow find a source for a P.E. Box, and begin using the machine again in a significant way? I don't think so. I suspect they are gone forever.

Thread 2: You, the active users, don't need convincing. I could extoll the virtues of the 99/4A and 9640, but many of you can do that even more enthusiastically than I can. Barb Weiderhold of the Queen Anne Computer Shop in Seattle was at the Faire and at the drop of a hat can give a rousingly enthusiastic speech outlining all that's good about the TI. Barb may be the Knute Rockne of the TI world. Unfortunately, most of the team knows the score. The fact is that there are no new TI users beyond the occasional person who buys an old system from someone, and there hasn't been since the machine long ago left the marketplace. This leaves the all but inevitable attrition we have been experiencing for the past four years. So, am I saying we are doomed, or what? Well,

Thread 3: There will probably always be a hard core of TI users who will stay with it until either they or the machine drop, but there is also a certain number who are eyeing the ads for other machines. They convince themselves they will continue to use the TI as well, but find the balance tipping toward the "new" machine faster than they imagined. Soon, when a

choice has to be made about which machine to purchase new software for, the choice is already made. This may appear to make no difference to the avid TI user, but I suspect that there is a certain "critical mass" of TI activity necessary to continue to fuel progress. If the base continues to shrink, how soon will the point come when there are not enough users to put on TI Faires, to motivate the time and effort of third party software development, to maintain local user groups and newsletters like this one? One answer to all this is new blood, but where in the world will it come from?

Thread 4: When TI orphaned us in 1983 the entire home computer phenomenon was in decline. But recently in the computer press there is talk of a resurgence in the home computer market. Mostly this talk is in terms of the IBM clones or the "graphical interface" machines such as the Macintosh and Amiga 500. This is, to be sure, a more mature and demanding market than the "good old days." Note that the Myarc 9640 is trying for an MS-DOS-like operating system, AND has the graphics capability for a super icon-based user interface. Is it the best of both?

Thread 5: At the Faire, new Myarc spokesman Jack Riley presented a "knock your socks off" demo of My-Art, the 9640 drawing program. From the famous empty keyboard case of two years ago to last year's barely working P.E. Box card, to this: A high power, high resolution program which, short of professional CAD/CAM programs, can hold its own with any drawing program for any machine, period. At this rate of progress, however, perhaps our children can enjoy a fully functional Geneve 9640, if by that time there is any point to it.

Thread 6: Compared to the full 99/4A, the Geneve is several orders of magnitude up in power. Compared to the state of the art in microcomputing, it has the potential to set new standards, but right now it is insignificant. Ask the average person, even the average computer hacker about Myarc or the Geneve 9640 and you will get dumb looks. I would guess there is practically no one outside the 99/4A community who has heard of either. And this is what is important, because this is where any new blood is going to have to come from. Rumors still pop up about someone else producing a 99/4A clone, but none, as far as I know, can be taken seriously.

Thread 7: To stand still is to fall backwards. Progress is normal. There were millions of basic IBM PCs produced, many of which have been upgraded with more memory, speed-up boards, etc, and other owners who moved up to the XT, AT, and now into the 386 world (for almost the same prices as the original PC!). The old software still worked, but the new machines can do so much more and do it faster. This is what makes the 9640 a good idea in theory. This thesis says that a 9640 is to a 99/4A as an IBM PS/2 Model 60 is to a 64K IBM PC. But there are LOTS of problems. For example, Myarc is not IBM, or even Texas Instruments (which understood this same idea in planning the 99/8).

Thread 8: Phillips surprised many of us in 1985 when he held up that empty keyboard at the Faire. Not just because it was empty, but because it was designed as a stand alone machine. This meant that someone who had never owned a 99/4A could purchase one of these and have entrance into our world. It would be a pipeline of new users, and a lifeline for us. Soon after that Faire, however, Myarc's plan changed and the Geneve 9640 was announced as a P.E. Box card instead, which is, in a way, a significant step backwards.

Thread 9: Back in 1984, at the second Chicago TI Faire, Don Bynum said that almost 2 million 99/4A consoles were sold, but only about 100,000 P.E. Boxes. Many doubted and even questioned him about that last figure, but he stood by it, and I am beginning to wonder if it in fact was accurate. What this means for Myarc is a potential market of no more than 100,000 purchasers of the 9640, as opposed to a potentially unlimited market with a stand alone machine. The actual market is probably nowhere near this large. I would guess that the number of avid, regular users of the 99/4A is under 30,000, probably way under.

Thread 10: It was little noticed, but Ryte Data of Canada had a new P.E. Box at the Faire. The "99AT" looks like an IBM system unit. It has space for up to four half-height drives (presumably including hard disks) and five expansion slots. It has been advertised for about a year by Ryte Data, but this is the first time I have seen one. Advertised price = $155, and this is the only reliable source of new P.E. Boxes. Reliable, that is, if they can get permission from customs to ship them to the U.S. Add the price of a 9640 ($500), a floppy disk controller ($150, much more for a hard/floppy controller) and an RS232/parallel port ($100). Total system cost $900, but significantly it's a system with no TI equipment. Then add $100 for a mouse, $150 for "My-Numbers", the 1-2-3 clone, etc. Now look in Computer Shopper and see that the retail price of the new Amiga 500 is $699. You will also see IBM XT and even AT clones, fully configured for less than $1000, and less than $500 with minimal configuration. How do you convince the person without a computer to buy a full 9640 system instead of an IBM clone? It looks to me like you don't try to do that.

Thread 11: Many TI users don't care about thread 10, but they should. Without new blood there will be, as hard as it is to swallow, continued shrinkage of the TI community, and there is danger in that. People love their Model T Fords, but they don't drive them to work every day, and now parts are darned hard to come by. For whatever reason, you may not even be considering the purchase of a 9640, but you had better wish them well if continued availability of software and hardware is important to you. I don't know where that "critical mass" point is. Maybe it's still another four years away, maybe six (or maybe sooner than we think). But there were less people at this year's Faire than last year's, and less last year than in '85, and it wasn't for lack of trying. I submit that there is no one in the world who knows more of the details of how to put on a TI Faire than Don Jones. All of those details were covered, yet observe that the number of vendors selling TI software and hardware, as opposed to general computer supplies, is shrinking.

Thread 12: There is a fallacy going around which goes like this: "I don't need anything. My 99/4A, with its present hardware and software, does everything I want a computer to do. I don't care what else happens." And I suppose this person is using only original TI cartridges to do their work? This person is not using Funlwriter or any of the Freeware out there, or any third party software produced since 1983? Of course they do, but to operate or think in this manner is to stop any further development in the 99/4A world, and to contribute to shrinkage (slow death).

Thread 13: Okay, what exactly do we know about Myarc, and what exactly are they up to? When asked how many 9640s have been sold, we were told "no comment". When asked how many employees Myarc has, same story. This is beginning to remind me a lot of a certain semi- conductor company based in Texas. We heard about the delays in the original shipment because the

custom gate array chips weren't delivered on time from Japan. This leads either to visions of Far East factories churning out chips and boards which are shipped to the Corporate Headquarters in Basking Ridge (great name) New Jersey, or to a vision of four guys in Lou Phillips' basement who originally built the beta-test version of the cards with the pins reversed such that when inserted it blew out the P.E. Box. So, is it a stunning My-Art drawing program with promises of more to come, or $500 to be an involuntary tester of an unfinished DOS for a computer with an uncertain future? Would the real Myarc please stand up?

Come to think of it, these threads seem to make up a crazy-quilt rather than a tapestry. The fact is, I know of no similar group of orphans who have ever been rescued by a Myarc-like step-parent. There never was an Osborne 9640, and I assume there are closets somewhere with old Osborne portables in them (Ironically, I recall a former group member who left to purchase one). There are a number of things, some of which seem wildly improbable at this point, which Myarc is going to need to do to reinject life into the 99/4A community.

First, the price has to come down. Maybe you can get 99/4A enthusiasts to plunk down $500 for a card which will only work if you already own several hundred dollars worth of equipment, but no one else is going to go to the trouble of assembling a system just to get one. This does not increase the base of users. The 9640 stand alone, or some sort of package which includes the 99AT box is going to have to be worked out. If the machine can be proved superior to the recent Atari and Commodore machines perhaps that could justify $800 for a complete package, sans monitor. This would have to be followed by national advertising, including magazines, television commercials, etc. I assume this will all cost a few dollars. So,

Second, someone big will have to buy out Myarc. There was a rumor earlier this year that Yamaha, the Japanese electronic/piano/motorcycle company, perhaps noting the home computer resurgence, was interested in getting into the American micro market, and was considering Myarc. I have even heard the thesis advanced that Myarc is going to all this trouble because they are looking to be bought out (Why else would they reserve an expensive table at the CES each year for a non-existent product that has essentially no advertising? Or is it to perhaps get noticed by Hitachi, Sony, Yamaha, etc.?). Nothing could be better news than to have Yamaha or someone else from Japan, Inc. buy Myarc and infuse it with several million dollars in development money. I suspect they would find that a 9640 board can be built for considerably less than $500, especially in large volume. This is nothing against Phillips and friends. I assume he HAS to charge $500 for the 9640 to be able to develop it himself because he is not independently wealthy.

Some of you out there are probably saying to yourselves, "Myarc? We don't need no stinking Myarc!", we don't need anyone! We're fine! Really! (Thread 12) And of course you are. There will be more shrinkage, but it will eventually slow, settling into a small, stable base of users who have no third party software producers and no user groups. I guess what I am saying is that some of this is under our control and some of it isn't. If everyone in the TI world using a P.E. Box went out and bought a 9640 I'm sure it would make Myarc very happy, but it might not really change anything. The user base size MUST increase to offset those who leave and to add to the size of the market. This column has usually been both optimistic and enthusiastic about the future of the 99/4A, and I am

willing to listen to those of you with viewpoints which differ from those here. All in all I suppose there are other threads in and outside of the TI world, which, when woven together yield different pictures. But a lot of them aren't very pretty.

WHAT NEXT?: Despite all the apparent gloom above (it was a dirty job, but someone had to do it), the group for now will be going on as usual. I believe this means that the upcoming meeting will feature our annual "Swap-A-Rama" (don't blame me, Sam Pincus made up the name). Now that you have your Faire purchases sorted out, bring along that unused equipment. There will be tables set up for anyone to use. Maybe you can recover some of that money you spent, or pick up a great bargain. This is open to group members only.

THE RESULTS: Thank you Don Jones and Carole Goldstein for preparing the ballots which appeared in the newsletter two months ago. Somehow I got to count them. The officers for 1988 are: President, Hank Ellermann; Vice-President, Don Jones; Treasurer, Len Rovner; Secretary, Marcy Brun. And thank all of you who voted.

SubrouTInes: So many columns, so little time: The Spadventures will return next month, now that my schedule allows me time to breathe (and fly) again...In case you hadn't noticed, the Faire issue of this newsletter marked the second time in three months that it reached 76 pages...No progress yet on alternate places to meet once the College Center building closes in April. If someone knows of a hall large enough for us, let us know. Otherwise it may be the Brickyard Mall by default

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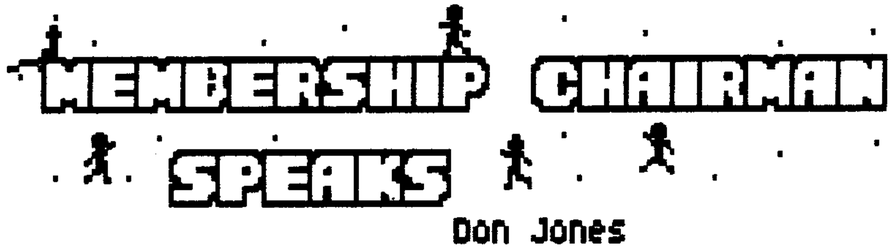

Don Jones

Well, Sports Fans, I guess that this is the last time that you will be hearing from me as the Faire Chairman. I accepted the job with the understanding that I would do it for this one time only. The main reason that I took the job because nobody else wanted it, and it was important, to me, that the high quality, which our president, Sandy Bartels, infused into the last two Faires, be maintained. Relative to this goal, I have done my best, and for this I will make no apologies. The Faire is now over, and whether or not I have succeeded in this is now a matter of public record. In this regard, I submit to the judgement of my peers. Happily, I can say that all went smoothly and very well. For this, I have a great number of people to thank, for without their aid and support, I could not have succeeded in realizing my one year dream.

When I first accepted the monumental responsibility, for the Faire, my first concern was to maintain both the quality and the integrity which the previous Faire chairmen had brought to this important event. At the same time, I also felt that it was necessary to expand the scope and function of the Faire; it was important, to me, that our Faire become more cosmopolitan and less parochial. Though I wanted to see something larger and grander, I also realized that in order to do this, I would require the aid of more people than our previous Faires had utilized. I also realized that communication between me and

those additional individuals was essential to the realization of my one year dream. After my initial conceptualizing of what I wanted, I proceeded to petition various individuals to function as the heads of various committees. They were then given specific tasks, which I outlined to them both verbally and in writing. It was apparent to me that this would be the only way that I could expand the scope of this year's Faire without burning myself out or the usual "professional volunteers" that our group is blessed to have. I therefore feel, in retrospect, that the success of this year's Faire was largely the result of having the most capable and sincere people on my team. I am deeply grateful to all of you for your both significant and, in many cases, extravagent sacrifices. I salute you all!

THANKS!!!

First, I would like to thank Sandy Bartels. As the president of our group, she supported me in every reasonable and honorable way possible. Without that support and confidence, I could not have begun to do what I did. In addition to her support, Sandy gave birth to the idea of our first ever "Friday Night Social Mixer." As this was her idea, I requested that she act as the chairman for this particular event; Sandy graciously accepted the job. Thereafter, Sandy did virtually all of the work and organization related to this particular event. It was an enormous undertaking, but, as everyone who attended the mixer can attest, it was a total success. But, in addition to bearing the heavy responsibility for the mixer, Sandy also volunteered to do the "lion's share" of the telephone calling. By doing this, Sandy relieved me of an enormous burden, as I was finding that some entire days were being spent on the telephone! For all this, and so much more, Sandy, thank you very much.

This year, we had a new face in the group, and it was the face of someone who had a very profound influence on this last Faire. I am, of course, speaking of Marcy Brun. Marcy joined our group only last January. In conversation with her, I found that she had worked for some professional show organizers! My first reaction was that the gods had smiled upon me. I then very carefully asked her if she would function as the Faire manager. To my relief, she agreed. In that capacity, Marcy shared with me the standards and proceedures which the big boys use for the larger, professional productions. I must therefore admit that it was the elegant protypes which she provided me with that gave me my idea of how I wanted the Faire to function. Marcy gave me the criticisms and advice which allowed me to develop, in my mind, a model of the kind of Faire that I wanted to head. Her shared thoughts were of inestimable value. I am therefore deeply appreciative for her ideas, for without her valuable input, the quality with which I attempted to imbue this year's Faire with would surely have been sorely lacking. Also, in the months preceeding the Faire, Marcy acted as a conduit for all applications and forms which I received from various vendors. And, in addition to all this, Marcy worked like a demon on the day of the Faire, helping me to keep the show running smoothly. Marcy, I am tremendously indebted to you for your heavy sacrifices. I thank you very deeply.

Mike Chappell, the publicity chairman of the group, volunteered to do the publicity for the Faire. He also volunteered to function as my vice-chairman. In both capacities, Mike provided me with a great deal of aid and support; he was my "alter ego" and the one extra person who I could always be sure that I could depend on in case something went wrong and everyone else was tied up. This took a great burden off of my mind. In addition to this, the personal and moral support which he gave me were a great source of inspiration and help. Mike, thank you for your sacrifices. I am deeply appreciative of your support.

I am highly indebted to our hardware chairman, Al Stump. Al graciously agreed to my request that he act as my reservations chairman. Here, let it be known that it was Al's idea that we use the O'Hare/Kennedy Holiday Inn for our official Faire hotel. I don't think that either the feasability, the wisdom, or the intelligence of that decision can

be questioned. In fact, it should be clear that the overall quality of our Faire was immeasurably enhanced by our association with so prestigious a facility. Relative to this facility, I am totally unaware of any complaints or dissatisfactions. Al, I am not only deeply appreciative of the work which you did in your capacity as the reservations chairman, I am also indebted to you for your personal support and your loyal friendship. I don't think I could have gone on without you. Thanks, Al.

The person who made all intial contacts with the various speakers and presenters was my good buddy, Hank Ellermann. Hank seems to have the ability to find people who are otherwise completely incognito. By assuming the job of my chairman in charge of speaker reservations, Hank took a tremendous load off of my shoulders. Hank, thanks for a job well done. Thanks for your personal support and help. Thanks for the use of your board. Thanks for everything.

Mike "The Frogman" Maksimik was my chairman in charge of the arcade games. I really appreciate Mike's help, especially since he was also working on a p-Code presentation at the same time. Froggy, thanks for the help. The next time that you go diving, I hope that you will find a great treasure. Thanks.

Ken Knapp also did a double tour of duty. Ken functioned as my chairman in charge of transportation. His committee was in charge of moving attendees and exhibitors from the official Faire hotel to Triton College. Ken also spent the day working on the membership table. Ken, you are a good man, and I really appreciate your support and your sacrifices. Also, thank you for your on-going help on the membership table, before and during our regular meetings.

Another "double dipper" was Paul Farber. Paul helped schlepp exhibitors and attendees to and from the hotel, but he was also the chairman of our "Saturday Night Dinner." If you had the good fortune to be present, at that culminating event, you will know what a well planned, well organized, tastefully selected meal Paul had planned for us. Paul took on this responsibility, single-handedly, with all orders for tickets going directly to his home. Paul, you did a tremendous job. All of us who ate at the dinner will never forget it; it was great! Thank you for your help and your personal support.

There were two very important people who were also working very hard at this year's Faire. They were my chairmen for setting-up and breaking-down. Their jobs are unpopular because they involve good old-fashioned manual labor, but without them, nothing else could have been done. The chairmen in question were Tony Zlotorzynski and Jan Janowski. Both are friends of mine. Their personal support therefore meant a great deal to me. Thanks guys. The two of you performed your respective jobs with efficiency and alacrity. You functioned with such intelligence and independence that you ended up taking a great burden off of my mind. I knew that I could trust you men to handle the job without my supervision or intervention, and it is now clear that my trust was well placed. There are no words which can adequately express my appreciation. Thank you, my brothers.

Jon Bartels and Dave Wakely cooperatively handled the announcements for the entire Faire. Gentlemen, I am very deeply appreciative of the time which you both sacrificed to do this important job. Not only did you perform the task, as I outlined it, in the duty description forms, which I sent you, but you performed the job with dignity and reserve. There were therefore no gratuitous announcements which would have given our Faire an atmosphere which would be more appropriate for a carnival or circus. Rather, you made all of the announcements which you were given on our announcement schedule form. You also made any other necessary announcements, when requested to, by me or any other persons in authority. Your general help and cooperation was very instrumental in the creation of the ambience which I initially envisioned for this Faire. Gentlemen, you were very instrumental to the realization of my one year dream. Thank you for you help and support.

Bob Knapik is probably the newest addition to our executive board. Bob came in ready and prepared to do anything that he was asked. Bob ended up on one of our group sales table, as did Nick Iacovelli. Also, working that same table, were Paul Farber (I guess that that makes Paul a "triple dipper") and Alphanse Antonowitz. To Alphanse, I must say that you truly made a very heavy sacrifice. In fact, I was almost feeling guilty about seeing you just sitting at this duty post for what seemed like the entirety of the Faire. Your sacrifice was indeed an extravagant one. I thank you very deeply.

Another person, who came to my attention at the Faire, was Mario Garza. I never knew who Mario was, by face, before the Faire. Then, after the doors opened, I ended up seeing Mario's praetorian presence virtually every time that I visited the vicinity of the Faire entrance. Here was another person whose extravagant sacrifices almost made me feel guilty. Mario, you are a good man, and I am proud to have had a man of your calibre working on my team. Thank you for your significant contributions.

Initially, when I first started the organization of this year's Faire, I asked my friend Ed ("The Mighty Buzzard") Krantz to handle the position of equipment chairman. Due to problems at work, and an unfortunate change of schedule, Buzz was unable to handle this job, but what Buzz did do was make virtually all of the banners and signs which we were using for the "Friday Night Social Mixer" and the Faire. In addition to this, Buzz extended to me the support which one requires from those whom we call friends. Buzz, I appreciate the heck out of people like you.

Since Buzz was unable to do the job which I requested of him, who do you think did take on the awesome task of equipment chairman? It was none other than Mark Harms. Mark came in, at Sandy's request, to handle the equipment chairman's job. At first, I did not know Mark, and I did not know exactly what to expect. Finally, when I had the chance to talk to him, on the phone, I was so impressed with the way that he had chosen to organize his job that I just simply knew that I had the right man for a very important job. The independence with which Mark handled his position was indeed most admirable, and it took a great deal of worry off of my already over-burdened mind. Mark, thanks for a job well done.

Sam Pincus, a former president of this group, worked our main group sales table. Sam, as usual, worked under the supervision of Mrs. Pincus, who, each year, takes the time to help us out at our Faire. All kidding aside, Sam, your hard work, and that of your wife, was deeply appreciated. Thank you very much.

Another yearly husband and wife team is that of Mr. & Mrs. Len Rovner. Unfortunately, the scheduling of certain family events kept Mrs. Rovner from being with us, this year, but, in his desire to keep the Faire as a family event, Len had his son there. Len, thank you for both your work and your continuing support, throughout the year. I deeply appreciate your considerable sacrifices.

"Fast Eddie" Svizzero was my audio/visual set-up chairman. He was the man who made sure that the audio visual equipment was running well, in the Fireside Lounge for all of the speakers and demonstrators. Thanks for your help, support, and friendship.

Nancy Rauch, a good friend of Sandy Bartels, agreed to handle the membership table for me during the Faire. Nancy also helped Sandy with the setting up of the exhibitors' hospitality suite, at the official Faire hotel, and the "Friday Night Social Mixer." Nancy did a fine job with what is usually a very thankless task.

My good neighbor, Irv Levinson, put in what came to be the entire day, on the membership table. I didn't expect that, but I remain appreciative of the sacrifice. Irv is also the man who sends out the packets to our new non-attending members. Irv, I also deeply appreciate your continuing sacrifices. throughout the year. Thanks, Neighbor.

I'M ONLY HUMAN!

Here, I find myself in a very embarrassing situation. There was a gentleman who volunteered to handle one of the entrances to the Fireside Lounge, to make sure that no one would enter with video equipment or lighted cigarettes. He came early, and he worked until late in the day. He provided very fine service, but I neglected to write down his name so that I could thank him here. For this I give both my apologies and my thanks.

Another person who was working the doors upstairs is another person whom I can never forget. I am speaking about my friend Nate Johnson. Nate doesn't make very many of our meetings now, due to his present working schedule, but Nate agreed to handle the above mentioned job on short notice. At the time of the Faire, Nate was working nights. Nate came directly to the Faire, from work, in order to spend the entire day helping me out. Such loyalty, such friendship, and such extravagant sacrifices leave me without words, adequate to express my appreciation. Thank you, Nate.

My good buddy, and Geneve salesman, "Big Bob" Demeter did a great job working with the group's library. In fact, Big Bob even had David Green, a volunteer from NEW JERSEY working the table with him. It seems that some people will even travel thousands of miles to volunteer! I also noticed Paul Farber's son working the library table. There were also others whose names I can't remember, or in some cases never knew. Thanks to all of you for a job well done.

Camille Robinson and her daughter were extremely helpful in their efforts to sell our Faire Booke during the show. Many thanks, Camille, to you and your whole family.

Another family team on hand was the Shanafields. I might also mention that they are also fellow Evanstonians. (Hi, Neighbors!) The whole Shanafield family manned the back-issues table. Harold, who is my back-issues chairman, also helped with the arcade games. My most sincere blessings and thanks to this great and beautiful family. Thanks, to all of you.

Ken Czerwinski was our liason between the group and Triton College. Without Ken, we would not have had access to the place. Ken, thanks for all of your help throughout the year. I deeply appreciate it.

Thank you Carole Goldstein for taking on the burden as the editor of the Faire Booke. This took a great deal of pressure off of me, and the book was very well done.

Special thanks goes to Don Walden, the president of the Milwaukee Users' Group and the Wisconsin TI Council, for his support and the usual extra systems.

Thanks also goes to all of those of you who brought and loaned the group your equipment. Without this sacrifice, we could not have had a successful show.

Thank you Grant Schmalgemeier for getting the mail.

To Tony Zlotorzynski's son, I have the following message: Thanks for your help, little brother. I really appreciated having you around. If you grow up to be half the man that your dad is, you will be better than most of the people around you. Thanks for the help.

Thank you Irwin Goldstein for video taping the exhibits and the mixer.

I also wish to personally thank all of the exhibitors, demonstrators, and presenters for their time, cooperation, and confidence which they have extended to both me and our yearly Faire.

TEXT BUFFER OVERLOAD!!!

I have attempted to extend thanks to all of the people who I know that have made real contributions to the Faire. Unfortunately, I am only human, and I am sure that there are some individuals whom I have forgotten. It was not done purposely; there is only so much information that any medium can hold. I feel that I have reached my limit. Also, there are some persons whose names I don't know, though we may have spoken, and though I may know the face. To those who I have neglected to call by name, I beg your forgiveness and extend both my blessings and thanks. Without your help, the Faire could not have been the success that it was.

I would also like to thank those individual attendees who took the time to come up to me and personally extend to me their appreciation for the Faire. I was really very deeply touched by the many displays of appreciation and thanks. At one point, it was if I was surrounded by well wishers. Thank you all.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank my wife, my daughter, and my son, for putting up with me for the last year, while I was putting this event together. Without your, support, understanding, and succor, I would be nothing, and I realize it. I thank God, the Earth, the gods, and the ancestors, for having been blessed with such a beautiful family and so many wonderful friends.

IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE

Dear and gentle readers, I am tired. I need a change. I am therefore formally relinquishing my responsibilities, as the membership chairman of this group. I need a rest. What I hope to do, instead, is to write a support column on the Geneve. It is the machine that I have committed myself to, and I want to help others to also enjoy their machines. To those of you who have been of help to me in this former capacity, I extend to you both my thanks and all of the blessings that I have to offer.

I am sure that though this year's Faire was probably the biggest that we have ever seen, it won't be the last. There is still a heck of a lot of life in the TI community out there. Let us keep up the faith and the work. After a Faire such as our last one, it is clear that, to me, "Black Friday" should be called "Beautiful Black Friday" as it was TI's withdrawal from the market that forced groups like ours to become the cohesive entities that they presently are. "Black Friday" should therefore be a day of celebration and feasting, in the TI community; for mourning, I'll leave that for the pessimists.

REPORT ON THE FIFTH CHICAGO TI FAIRE

By Warren Agee

Report on the Fifth Annual Chicago TI FAIRE Saturday, November 7, 1987

Written by Warren Agee CIS: 70277, 2063

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I had the pleasure of attending the Fifth Annual Chicago TI FAIRE, one that is fast becoming the grand-daddy of national TI/Geneve gatherings.

This was the third consecutive faire I have attended, and it gets better every year. A good number of people showed up, and although I don't have the exact attendance figures, the room seemed just as full as last year. The faire itself seemed very well-organized, with a "mixer" the evening before the show (which I did not attend). What follows is 1) A report of the faire itself, highlighting new products; 2) A brief summary of all the great personages I had a chance to meet; 3) A brief description of the banquet afterwards.

Unfortunately, there were too many people to meet and not enough time to spend sufficient time at every single booth at the show, but I think I did manage to see most of the 'new exciting' products at this year's gathering.

GENIAL COMPUTERWARE: this booth, headed by the ever-popular luminary J. Peter Hoddie, was very busy all day long, and for good reason; they released PC-Transfer by Mike Dodd, which facilitates the transfer of data between the 99/4A or Geneve and an MS-DOS system. It can format an IBM 360K disk with a TI drive, and transfer files between the two systmes, both ways. CorComp has been selling a similar product for quite some time, but it's on a cartridge and costs twice as much as PC-Transfer, which sells for $25. Also released was Remind Me! bye John Johnson, which is a very slick calendar program that helps manage a monthly schedule. Price: $15. Lastly, they had a new progrma called Graphics Expander (by JPH) which takes a TI Artist or CSGD font and changes its size. Written entirely in assembly, it allows you to stretch a font horizontally and vertically, and you can save the result as EITHER a TI ARTIST or CSGD font. That means you can easily convert fonts to either format! Again, very slick, and it sells for $10. Peter also gave a presentation at 3:00pm during the show, at which he gave a brief autobiography of himself and demonstraed his company's new software. Startling revelations: the J in his name stands for James. IMPORTANT!! Due to his untimely illness, Barry Traver, the other half of Genial Computerware, was unable to attend this year's faire, and he was sorely missed. Everyone say a prayer for Barry that he return to us soon and in good health.

RYTE DATA: I only was able to get a brief demonstration from this company, but I thought it appropriate to mention Ryte Data's new 99AT Expansion System for both the /4A and Geneve. It looks like an IBM PC on the outside, but the innards have been rearranged to hold a large power supply, up to four half-height drives (including a hard drive), and five slots for standart TI size cards made by TI, Myarc, SorComp, Horizon, Foundation, Mechatronic, etc. Now tht the Myarc Geneve computer is available, we need a new expansion box, and here we have one. Price: $155 with 135 watt power supply and built-in system interface. Just plug in your Geneve and assorted cards, some drives, and you're all set. $165 for the above with 99/4A interface cable set installed.

McCann Software: I give this the 'Most Interesting Announced Product' award of the show. I also hope that they change their name, because the new product isn't software, its hardware! The 'avanti 99' is a multiprocessor Board for the TI 99/4A powered by the NC 4016 Forth Engine. Details that I have were a bit sketchy, but this is what the handout says, in part: The Avanti 99 is fully programmable. The NC4016 Forth Engine on each card has 48K of its own high-speed static RAM, and each card has the CM-FORTH operating system in ROM. Several of these

cards can be installed and used for different operations in the PEB at the same time. One card is fast - they say it runs at 5MIPS, which stands for 5 Million Instructions Per Second. Apparently, as you add more cards, you can have a total of 25-30 MIPS of computing power. For some reason that sounds more like a marketing maneuver than fact. I will defer to the experts on that matter. Suggested retail price is $500, available before January 1. (which year? the circular did not say. <grin>)

DIJIT Systems had their AVPC card running Multiplan in 80 colums. Asgard was there with their full line of software, and a smiling Chris Bobbitt wearing an Asgard tee-shirt. Jim Horn manned the DOS/Compuserve TIFORUM booth while the enire TIFORUM message base scrolled by continously on his transportable Zenith cmputer (I think), complete with an inoperative shift key. 'Twas a great pleasure to see Terrie Masters again at the LA 99ers booth, and had the honor to meet Tom Freeman for the first time. Richard Mitchell had his customary position on the floor in the Bytemaster Booth showing his String Master utility for programmers and various issues of the Smart Programmer and Super 99 Monthly. Jack Riley was holding up the fort at the Myarc booth while being bombarded with questions about everything from "where is the HDCC" to "why did you wear a polkadotted tie". Where is the HDCC? Real Soon Now. Lou Phillips, who was scheduled to speak, was conspicuously absent at the show. This was a shame, since people asked Jack several technical questions during his presentation that he could not answer. Peter Hoddie helped Jack out at the tail end of the presentation by talking about My-Word 2, Peter says in general he plans to make MY-WORD function more like a main-stream word processor. That means <insert> continuously inserts as you type, <backspace> deletes as you can backspace, etc. A significant improvement will be macros, where you can define any key combination (including predefined ones) to do anything you want. He would basically like to see MY-Word completely user-definable. He did not specify a cmpletion date, but estimates that perhaps it would be ready by mid-to-late winter.

I met Mike Dodd, whom Peter describes as "scary, he's so good." Only fifteen years of age, he does work for Myarc, writes commercial software (like PC TRANSFER), and authors a Geneve column for MICROpendium. Now if J. Peter Hoddie calls Mikd Dodd scary, that scares me even more! Great talent, and a nice guy to boot.

Lets see now...anyone else I missed? I missed Paul Charlton, but that was because he could not make it to the show. I finally got to meet Barb Wiederhold, owner of the Queen Anne Computer Shoppe in Seattle, Washington, a computer evangelist extraordinaire. I heard they had to PRY the microphone away from her at the Mixer held the night before. She was at it again during th show, when she spoke about the future of the TI and Geneve markets. Quite an enthusiastic lady who is genuinely excited about the Geneve 9640.
That's it for the FACTS concerning the CHICAGO TI FAIRE. I'm sure I've missed something, but there was a lot to see, both in booths and people. Even though I go because I own a 4A, what brings me back year after year is the PEOPLE. At the banquet held after the show, I sat at a table with Peter Hoddie, Mike Dodd, Corson Wyman, Todd Kaplan, Jim Horn, and some others (whose names do not ring a bell at the moment, sorry!!) I got this great sense of community which I seldom feel sitting in front of the screen typing away on CompuServe. All these people, whether they be programmers, marketing-types, vendors, or

everyday hobbiest and users, flew or drove hundreds and thousands of miles to gather in one spot to talk techie and spend their wads. We even had two people from Italy and two from the Netherlands in attendance! What commitment (and lack of sanity, as Peter might say) we all have! What friends we have made! What fun we have had! I'm already shining my shoes for the next faire... BRING ON 1988 AND THE NEXT SHOW!

PS: Understandably, I forgot to mention that even though Myarc's Jack Riley spoke at a presentation, he didn't announce anything new. He did hint that some sort of IBM emulation in hardware would be coming sometime in the future.

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library shelf

— Bob Deneter —

Please pass me an I Survived The TI Faire T-Shirt. Hey man, I had the time of my life, I took full advantage of the Faire weekend. There weren't enough hours in the day to do everything I wanted. There was a big event with lots of people happening every day. Friday evening we had the Social Mixer. Quite a few people managed to attend and help me hold up a loose end of the bar. While we were doing that, several well known names were discussing the future of the TI community. The panel was made up of Jack Riley (Myarc), Barb Wiederhold (Queen Ann Computer Shoppe), Chris Bobbitt (Asgard), Dave Wakely (CTIUG), Todd Kaplan (CTIUG) and Franz Wagenbach (Mechatronics,T.A.P.E. Ltd.). From listening to this panel discussion, Don's (Jones) Faire theme seemed in order. "The Computer that Refuses to Die". From what I saw Saturday and Sunday, TI owners are out there in full support. Saturday and Sunday I spend at the library table in Chicago and Milwaukee. Both Faires and the entire week- end seemed to be a great success. The 2 Dons (Jones and Walden) are to be congratulated on the fantastic jobs they did. Had it not been for their hard work, dedication and ideas, the faire would never have came off so well. Congratulations D.J. and you too my friend up north, Don Walden. All in favor of having D.J. run next years faire raise their hands. Thanks for a great show, Don.

Speaking of thanking people, I have a lot of them to mention. For without them, the library wouldn't have been such a success. First I want to thank my dear friend Bill Hughes for all his help and endless dedication. Without his help we wouldn't have had half the disks we did. Bill helped me copy over 1100 disks before the Faire. You would have thought 1300 disks would have been enough. But not this year. People came to buy. And buy they did. Several of us spent the day copying about 3 or 4 hundred disks. I want to publicly thank all of you for your time and hard work all day. All of you worked your tails off with very little time to see the faire. I wish I could do more to show my appreciation. But, for right now, please come see me and take any 10 disks you want from the library. I know I don't have everyones name 'cause we were all running around too much. Please excuse me if I forget to mention your name here. A couple of you I know by face but didn't catch your name. Special thanks to my friend Dave Green who flew in from New Jersey to help me out again. Hope you enjoyed yourself Sat. and Sun. How was the return flight? Thanks a million, pal. George Lempeotis spent his entire day copying disks in the back room. George, you don't know how much I appreciate all your help and hard work. You had a lot thrown at you and you performed well. Thanks again. I don't

know the guy that gave George a break so he could get something to eat. Please come see me and intro- duce yourself. I appreciate your help and concern. Make sure you pick yourself some good disks. My good friend James Brooks found out what it's like working in the library instead of carring mail. Bet you're glad to be back at the Post Office, right? Thank you kind sir for volunteering. We all appreciate your hard work and much needed help. My good buddy John Birdwell offered his assistance and got thrown into the library before he knew what hit him. Lots of fun, hey John? I know Bill would never have received a lunch break without you. Thanks again for all your help. Good luck with DSKU 4.0. Bill tells me there was a real nice guy named Mike that stepped in and lent a hard working hand. Mike, please excuse my ignorance and come get your disks. From what I hear, you really deserve them. Stop by and say hi so I'll know who to pester for help next year. Laura Heiberger, want to volunteer next year? You did such a wonderful job this year. I simply MUST have you next year. Thanks a lot for giving up your time to spend in the library. Make sure you get some good disks. Paul Farber, you were good. But, I'm saving my favorite little buddy for last. David, you may or may not know this, but your help was definately requested. David Farber did such a great job working the library table last year, I asked his father (Paul) if he could help this year too. Dave's a little guy in grade school that really knows how to handle the TI and works well under stress. Last year and this, he was the person in charge of keeping the main table supplied with disks. Dave sat there almost all day and copied his little head off. Thanks a million for all your help, buddy. Make sure you find some- thing you can use from the library. And please don't go and break your arm again this year. Please forgive me if I left your name out. I know there must have been others that helped. Please stop by and see me or Bill at the next meeting. Remember to leave your name so I can mention you in the next newsletter. Everyone that worked in the library should be given a big hand of applause and a hardy THANK YOU from all the Faire goers you helped and served so quickly and intently. Thanks again one and all.

No Marcy, I didn't forget you. Matter of fact, I'm dedicating this entire paragraph to you. Everyone at the Faire or in our club should know who Marcy is. Poor Marcy came to a meeting one month to sell her TI and ended up being talked into joining the group. Then we managed to persuade her to help with the Faire. She ended up being Don's #1 assis- tant. You may have noticed Marcy trying to walk around indiscriminately with a 108" antenna strapped to her back. Marcy was on the go all day. I know Don really appreciates your help. Marcy and I attended the Faire in Milwaukee. She and I worked the groups Library table there. I have to thank her here publicly for all the hard work she did. Our Faire offically closed at 6pm Sat. evening. The library had taken a beating all day. We needed disks copied for the Milwaukee show. Armed with her P-Box and console, Marcy helped me copy about 300 disks Saturday night. This is true DEDICATION and CONCERN for her group. Marcy, I can not say or do enough to thank you for your tireless help. You could have partied all night and had lots of fun. But you gave it all up for the good of the group. I know one thing, you sure made Sunday an easier day to handle. Thank you a sextillion (thats a number with 21 zeros after it) for all your help. If there's anything I can ever do for you, wash your car, paint your house, mow your lawn. Let me know, I'll see if I can locate some volunteers. Just kidding (grin). Really folks, Marcy is a great person and hard worker. By the way Mark Grauer, I owe you a pizza. Thanks for my lunch Sunday. We'll have to get together.

Boy what a crazy mood I'm in. I think I still have the Faire fever. I think everyone was crazy at the faire. "I need that. What is it". Is what I heard people saying all day. They came to buy and buy and buy. Just about every piece of hardware and software went. All the vendors seemed to have a good day. Like I said, the library did too. I hope you still have some money left. I have some really good programs to tell you about today.

Due to the size of last months newsletter, the Fairware and 9640 Support library lists didn't get published. I was told they would be in this month. Because I'm a lazy sap, I have not included these new pro- grams in the list. That'll give me an excuse to make

another list. I am enlisting more help to do mailings. This should free me up to add more programs to the library and update the list more frequently. My good friend Tom Niemczyk has agreed to help Bill Hughes, Mike Maksimik and myself with the mailings. Effective immediately, there will be some changes in the handling of library orders. They are:

1) Library orders will be split between 4 people. 2) A system of check and balances will be incorporated. All order forms will be photocopied. The check and original will stay in a file. Orders will be filled from the copy. 3) Orders will be stamped when recieved and when filled. 4) All orders must be filled within 2 weeks. 5) No checks will be cashed until the order is filled. 6) All orders over $25.00 will be sent return receipt or insured. 7) Orders will be sent to a new address. This will allow me to get them quicker and get them dispersed properly.

Please make a note of our new mailing address. This address is for LIBRARY ORDERS only. All other mail must go thru the groups regular P.O. Box. LIBRARY ORDERS go to: Bob Demeter P.O.Box 454 Whiting,Ind. 46394

NOTE: Contributions to the library may go to the above address too.

OK, let's talk programs. First off, let's talk about Personal Auditor by Bill Gaskill. As you all know, Personal Auditor was reviewed in the Super Summer issue by Jack Topham. Although there were many requests for the program, I was not able to get my hands on a copy of it till a few weeks ago. Since that time, I have received a letter from Mr. Gaskill requesting we pull the program from the library. The cost of producing his professionally made 120 page documentation has risen. The price of the suggested donation has almost doubled. Although Personal Auditor seems to be a fantastic program, we will be forced to live with- out it. Our only hopes is some day Mr. Gaskill will either go commercial with his outstanding program or divide it into several small Fairware programs. In any event, we will NOT see Personal Auditor in the Fairware library. Mr. Gaskill, I wish you much success in your future programming endeavors. I hope to see many quality programs from you. Perhaps some day you may change your mind and give the world another Auditor program. I know there will be many members in our group that will be disappointed in hearing this news. I know we will be anxiously awaiting your next contribution to the TI community.

Another Public Domain program has been released into the 9640 Support Library. It's called GENUTILS. It is set up to load from drive 1 or from your Horizon RAMdisk. Running this program from GPL will place a menu on your screen. The menu will show A-MYWORD B-DM1000 C-RUN PROGRAM D- GENEVE UTILITIES. Pressing A will load a modified MYWORD program. B will load and run DM1000 and C will load any E/A 5 program. Pressing D will take you to another menu. This menu will give the following options on screen. 1- Set Clock 2- Show Directory 3- Shorten GRAM Module and 4- Print Files. Option 3 will allow you to change some GROMs to 6K bytes. This will shorten the programs by 8K. Now they will only require 26 sec- tors as opposed to the original 34. Option 4 Print Files will allow you to print DV 80 files to printer or disk. 9640 Support Library disk $2.00

Mike Amundsen has written a program called PULSAR. Pulsar is an assembly language utility. This program allows you to write assembly language programs in a style similar to writing an Extended Basic program. 3 example programs are included on the disk. They are RANDOM/S, READ/S and INPUT/S. Mike has released this program into Public Domain. He is hoping to spark an interest into this type of programming. This looks like a very interesting language to get into. Buy it and Try it. It'll be in the Regular Library for only $4.00

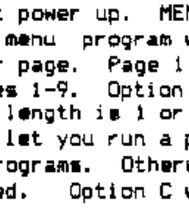
UNIVERSAL DISASSEMBLER is a Forth language Fairware program by Rene' LaBlanc. This program is loaded with everything. It will let you disassemble everything, including the

kitchen sink. There is nothing on the main menu it won't do. It can disassemble console ROM, command modules, expansion RAM, or disk. This disassembler is by far the most versatile and powerful program I've seen in it's category. If you are looking for a disassembler I would recommend this one. $2.00

With the onslaught of Horizon RAM Disks, I think it is time I added some HRD utilities to our library. I've owned an HRD for over a year now and can not live without it and the Johnson Menu. John Johnson and Mike Baldman have created a menu program that will display itself at power up. MENU version 7.0 is the newest one out. As with other versions, this menu program will display a 3 page menu of user defined options. There are 9 options per page. Page 1 always has the first 3 options predefined. Option 1 lets you catalog drives 1-9. Option 2 will let you read any DV or DF file. It doesn't matter if the character length is 1 or 255. You can read ANY file without loading in a WP. Option 3 will let you run a program. If you have your XBasic cart plugged in, it will let you run XB programs. Otherwise it runs E/A 5 programs without the cart. Options 4-9 are user defined. Option C will load the cartridge in the slot. Pressing B will take you to console basic. Shift 1 will dump a catalog to printer. Shift 2 will dump a DF or DV file to printer. P will set up your printer defaults. S will display option 3 from the cartridge menu. Once you have a disk catalogged, you can use the X or E key to underscore filenames. After underscoring a filename you can go back to the menu screen. Pressing 2 or 3 will default to the underscored file. This can make loading and running a program as easy as 3 key strokes. Menu 7.0 will work with all versions of HRD. But, it's main reason for existence is to partition HRD's. This is great for use with a 512K or 1 meg HRD. Your 1 meg can now emulate 2 drives at once. Or, you can divide your 180K into 2 90K drives. With MENU 7.0 you can call 2 physical drive numbers and 7 drives by volume name. This is truely one of the most powerful menu programs in existence. Get it now. Regular Library $4.00

Bob Wolff of the Northern NJ 99ers has sent us an update to his DISK PRINTER program. You may recall Jack Topham did a review of this fine program in the Super Summer issue. Disk Printer makes some beautiful disk jackets and labels. DISK PRINTER 2 is now void of lockups. User menues have undergone some changes. The entire program is a real work of art. Also, Bob has donated this Fairware program to the user group. All proceeds of it's sale are to go to the group. Bob, I can not thank you enough for such a generous offer. If there is anything in our library you desire, feel free to let me know. DISK PRINTER 2 is now in the groups Fairware Library. Come buy one and stop wondering what's on all your disks. File comments can be included on the label. $2.00

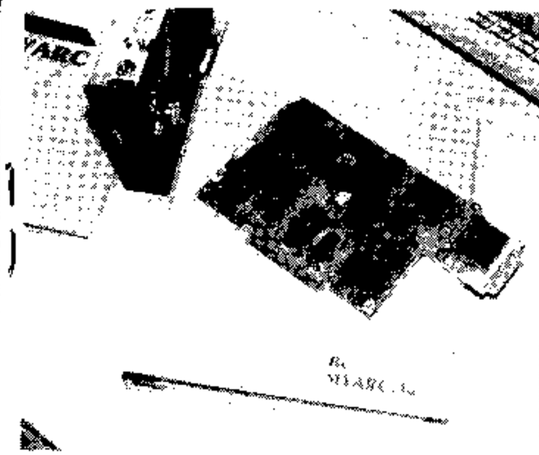
Well I guess I better pull the plug on this. I'm already late as usual. Oh well, better me then my wife. Oops, can I say that in a family newsletter. Better not. Delete delete delete. There, that's better. Now they'll never know. Thumb me in next month. Yes, thumb! I couldn't say tune or dial. You'll just have to thumb thru to find me. So, thumb me in next month and I'll have found time to review PICCASO that's been laying around for several weeks. I also have the new FUNKWEB 4.0 and a host of others. Till then, put your disk in drive and function equal. Bye bye.

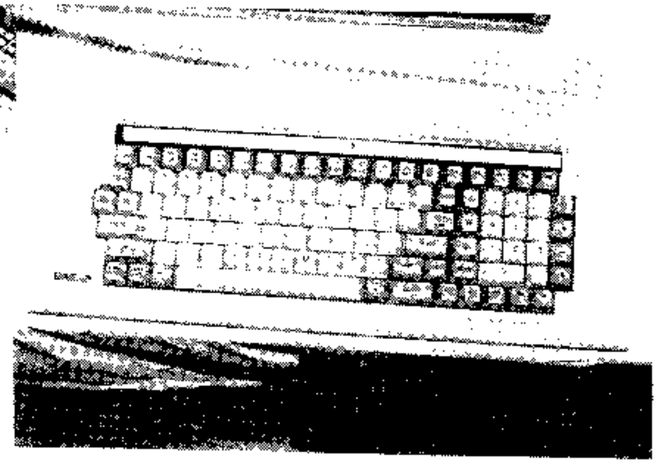


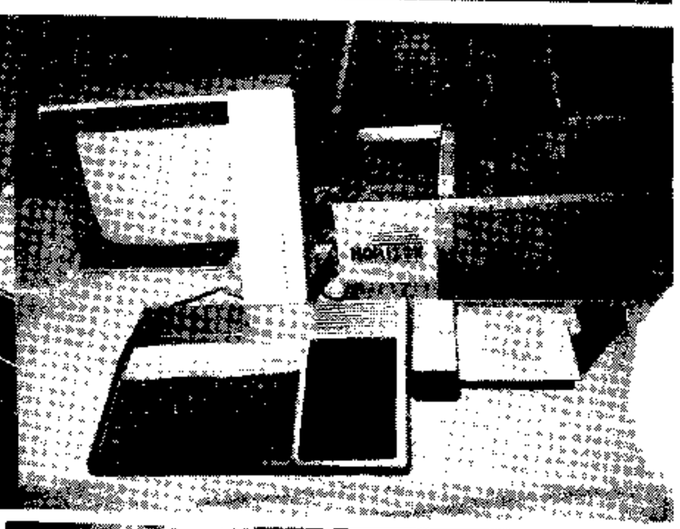
TRADING TIMES

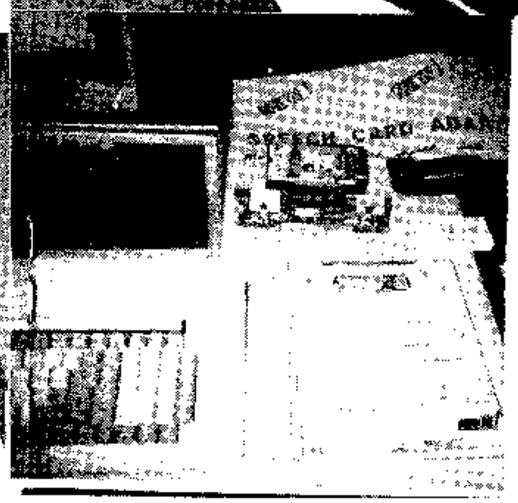
Mary Borges has the following for sale: a TI99/4A console, Peripheral Expansion Box, Memory Expansion, TI Logo, Extended Basic, and various cartridges. You can reach her at (312) 956-0469.

Pictures from the 5th annual
Chicago TI Faire









PROCESSED DATA

BY Sandy Bartels

I'm sure that everyone that has an article in this months newsletter has raved about this year's Faire. Well I'm not going to be any different then anyone else. IT WAS GREAT! Everyone that worked on the Faire can give yourself a pat on the back, and the people that didn't work on the Faire let me say that you missed a lot of fun. Don Jones did a great job and so did all his chairmen. I hope all the people that attented the mixer had as much fun as I did. I want to thank all my Friday night mixer workers, Nancy Rauch, Todd Kaplan, and Ken Knapp, Paul Farber, Mike Chappel, and Jon Bartels (my super husband).

This will be my last column as president of this club. I want to say that it has been a great year, but I'm looking forward to some rest. I want to thank all my board members that worked so hard this year to keep the club moving ahead. I especially want to thank my husband who put up with so much in the last year so that I could carry out my duties as president. We have some new things coming up. Carol Goldstein will be working with Comp-U-Serve during the next year. She will explain her new job in the newsletter later as the details are worked out. Bob Demetor and I have been working on a new way of handling the library and very soon we will see a lot of new disks in the library. There is a very good chance that I have found a computer show chairman, Mark Harms said that if all goes well that he will take the job. This is a very important job, because we need attending members and it looks like the groups' participating in the various area computer shows is the best way to meet prospective attending members.

Our club has had a few problems in the last year, but this is not unusual with a club that has grown so fast over the last two years. Volunteerism is the oil that keeps the group machinery functioning, and everyone has worked very hard and should be proud of what they have created and maintained.

FINAL REPORT on the 1987 TI-Faire: By Marcy Brun

Well, this is Marcy again. I hope you all had a wonderful time at the Faire. It was really exciting, wasn't it?

You would have never known that this was the first TI-Faire Social Mixer. 125 people showed up and had a great evening. That was really good for being the first time. There was a beautiful buffet of snacks and little sandwiches, a cash bar that had more than your usual meeting hall bars. (They even had my concoction.) Everyone was enjoying introducing themselves around. Then we had a panel discussion which went very well. It went so well that no one wanted the music after the panel discussion. They just kept

wanting to talk "shop". Oh well, maybe next year we'll have some dancing.

I was very happy to find out that a lot of people did plan on staying at the hotel. The last count that I had, which was a week before the Faire, was that we had reserved 75 rooms. That is very good. I'm very happy that people took the opportunity to make this a weekend affair.

Well, for those of you who did not make the Faire, I'm sorry. You really missed a good Faire. The exhibit hall was filled with 36 vendors manning 45 tables. This did not include our club tables which filled the hallway at the entrance. There was everything you could imagine: new programs, new computers, paper, disks, storage boxes, software. You name it....it was there. And there were bargains all day. We had crowds of people coming in all day long. There was never a dull moment, never a time where we didn't have attendees coming in the door. This is the mark of a successful show.

As I was going around talking to the exhibitors at the show, they were telling me how great they thought the Faire was. I found out that our Faire is the biggest and best run TI show around. Practically all of this years exhibitors have already committed themselves for 1988. Next year we will have to find another hall for the Faire because of remodeling. Hopefully we can find a bigger hall so we have room for even more exhibitors for you to meet. So next year plan on coming to the Faire and having a wonderful time.

I would like to thank all the exhibitors for their door prize donations. This was really a big hit. We had so many door prizes that there was one about every fifteen minutes. This was a way for the exhibitors to help put the Faire together and make it exciting. We really appreciated it and I'm sure all the winners did too.

As I was sitting at the dinner after the Faire on Saturday night,it occurred to me that everyone looked so relaxed, as if they were completely exhausted and couldn't get out of their chairs. But I think everyone was very grateful as to having a dinner to go to and not having to worry about rushing out right away. This gave them a chance to calm down before their long drive if they were leaving that night. A special thank you to Triton College for putting on such a good dinner.

I had the opportunity to be one of the club members that went to the Milwaukee show to man the booth we had there. This was a very nice show. They had about 250 attendees. A lot of the exhibitors we had went up to exhibit in Milwaukee, which made it a nice opportunity to talk to them again and to get to know the exhibitors better for myself. Thank you Don Walden for inviting us up to your show. I think we can say that the theme of the TI-WEEKEND was a success.

By the way, I have to make a correction on the exhibitors list. If you would like to order anything from Genial Computerware, please send your order to Peter Hoddie at P.O. Box 183, Grafton, MA 01519 (617)839-4134. If you have any correspondence for Barry Traver, the Editor of Genial Computerware Traveler Diskazine, please write to 835 Green Valley Dr., Philadelphia, PA 19128 (215)483-1379.

Well, now that the show is over we can recuperate until next year. But don't plan on relaxing for long, because we have to get started on next years show. If anyone would like to help put the show together, please send me, c/o the P.O.Box, your name and address and what you would like to volunteer with.

Well, it has been fun talking to all of you each month. The next time you hear from me you'll know we have started working on the 1988 TI-Faire. The problem will be "How do we top the last one?"

PSF software reviews

PAUL FARBER

November 1987-This review is going to be somewhat limited since I am still a little burned out from the Faire. I will have quite a bit to write about in the near future since I think I spent a small fortune on programs from the vendors that exhibited. Coupled with these reviews are going to be a little task that I can see me working on with the UG Library. As a side benefit from the Faire I have 27 disks from Berry Harmsen of the Netherlands TI Group that includes the International version of TI Writer, a DOS for the 4A, and a few other little items. On top of this we've been given a copy of the Fairware Library Catalog of the Toronto Users Group (over 400 sectors of disk space). So folks there will be a lot of disks showing up in the library in the near future.

But, lets talk about a nice piece of commercial software that I purchased at the Faire. The title of this package is XBASHER, written by Mike Dodd, and distributed by Genial Computerware (P.O. Box 183, Grafton MA 01519) for the bargain price of $10.00. What XBASHER does is to take your extended Basic program and to collapse it in several ways. But before you can begin you have to save off your program in MERGE format and I would suggest that this be done to a blank disk. If you can save the merge file to a RAM disk that will be even better since there will be a lot of reads and writes as we progress through the program. Back to what XBASHER does; and does well (with one small exception that I'll get to in a bit). What the program does is to reduce your variable (both numerical and string) to single or maybe double (depending upon the total number) of letters, remove all REM's and !, crunch lines together, change CALL CLEARS, and change constants.

I have a data base program that I have written (and am still working on) that is written in XB and I'd thought that I would try XBASHER on it and see what happened. This pragram consists of 400 lines of code with quite a lot of subroutines and GOTO's in its makeup. Starting XBASHER up and timing it the results were pretty impressive. The program took only 18 minutes to scan the entire program (it tells you where it is while it is working) and then another 22 minutes to compact the file and write it off to RAM disk. The reduction in program size was impressive with XBASHER taking my original program at 57 sectors and reducing it to 46 sectors on the disk. Additionally, XBASHER will produce a file (or go to printer depending upon your input) of the original variables and the ones that the program has replaced it with. This can be quite handy if you have to go back in and de-BUG it.

Now for the one item in XBASHER that I had a problem with, the CHANGE CONSTANTS option. The problem that I encountered was that when the program would make the substitution in a DISPLAY AT from a (1,1) for example to a (,) I would receive a SYNTAX ERROR message and a program crash. Without this substitution the program was about 300 bytes larger than previous but it ran just fine. Other than this I think XBASHER is a great little program for the XB programmer (by the way there are instructins in the doc's for using XBASHER with programs with assembly imbeded into it and in conjunction with PRESCAN-IT) and recommend it highly. Thats all for now, next month I'll be reporting on some graphics programs I am trying out right now.

And Then.... Carole Goldstein

As most of you know who have read my previous articles, I have been less than pleased with the Myarc 9640 machine. I have kept my fingers still on the subject for the past two months waiting to see an improvement that I still believe has to come. I can keep quiet no more!

At the dinner after the Faire, I finally got to talk with Jack Riley. I wanted to know WHY!, why are there still problems, why do I still feel like I took a giant step backwards when I received the upgraded machine.

Jack Riley is slick. He could probably convince most people to buy swampland in Florida. Its obvious why he was hired to do what he does. He does it well. He tried to snowball me but I was persistant. He did listen to my problems and complaints, but when he tried to tell me that Atari also had bugs when it came out, I told him I wasn't interested in Atari. He told me when Microsoft Word 4.0 came out it was full of bugs and the same with Microsoft Windows. Well, aside from the fact that he is comparing apples and oranges, my place of business was very involved with MS windows from its begining and believe me, if using it had been as frustrating an experience as using MyWord on the Geneve, we would not have sold as many of them as we have. Microsoft Word 4.0 is the newest release of that software and was not quite in general release at the time previous to the Faire. Since its release it has gotten rave reviews - no mention of bugs. But again, one has nothing to do with the other. Jack said in defense, that you could not sit at an IBM all day and not experience glitches. I told him that I sit at one all day, day after day and if I encounter a problem once a week, that's a lot. To which he replied that he had been using the 9640 all day without problems. I replied that if he gave it to me for five minutes, I would show him the problems.

At this point he asked me to get beyond the software. (He also said that the new versions were NOT fixing the major annoyances of redefining keys, runaway keys and non working keys.) I responded with amazement - beyond software to WHAT? MYART is the first new thing that has shown the power of the machine and I definitely was impressed.

I told Jack than I did see the machines potential since hardware without software is like a car without wheels, I told Jack that I did not like being so negatve. I would love to be able to say I wont a GENEVE and I'm proud of it. Unfortunately, right now I feel more like one of Myarc's fools. I asked Jack if every machine out there now was to be a test site and he admitted to it. As I told him, people usually do not and should not have to fork over up to $500 to become someone elses beta test sight. Companies beg for this kind of testing and they certainly do not charge for it.

Its interesting to me that when I went back and looked at the tapes of the faire once again, I did seem to notice Peter Hoddie struggling to make the 9640 work properly during the MyArt demo. I have also been told that others saw Jack having his own problems with the machine early in the day.

If a company knows that their software has bugs as in the case of MyWord with repeated updates on Compuserve, it should let its users know. And

if Jack wants to compare himself to Microsoft then let Myarc proceed like any reputalble company who admits to their bugs and immediately upon correction sends updates to the end user. Myarc lets you find out about the repairs if you are lucky enough to call one of the online services, or you hope that your dealer (who may or may not have it) will let you know, and then, may or may not charge you for the updates.

Jack also insisted that 90% of all TI software will run on the 9640. Well, I have not found this to be the case either. At that point I decided that his definition and mine of the word "run" were different. Jack had to mean that if you boot a program, something will happen. My definition involved it working exactly as it worked on the 4A.

Jack was very suprised at my opinions, or so he said. He told me that he had not run across others that were experiencing any displeasure with the machine. Well, there are others. I am not alone. Following this article is another that I took off Compuserve and I wish I still had others from the samesource that I had previously read.

C'mon Myarc - Get your act together. Maybe its not too late. Some of us still have hope.

AND THEN.....

As of last night, my Myarc 9640 has decided not to write to drives. No, I take that back. It has decided to wipe any drive I decide to write to. The machine is going back to Myarc tommorrow for exchange. Maybe the next one will even work.

My thoughts on the Geneve 9640: Bob Fowler

MY THOUGHTS ON THE GENEVE 9640

These comments are made as an owner of a 9640.

I have been an owner of a 9640 since around June 1987. To my first surprise as I excitingly opened the box there was no software!!!! Sitting there with a 9640 card, a beautiful keyboard and nothing that I was able to do with it. Luckily because of my connections as a sysop of a BBS I was able to obtain the minimum files that I required to at least fire up the thing. (What about the people that do not have my connections? I wonder what they do?)

Oh, by the way, I did receive a wonderful manual in a three ring binder, that did me no good at all!!! Seems the operating system that I was able to get at the time had nothing to do with the manual at all. Also, in the manual is a 254 page document telling me everything that I can do with the Myarc Advanced Basic. Looked good on paper but where is the Advanced Basic??? Where is the completed MDOS??? True, we now have an M-DOS Ver. 99B that is almost!! What we are supposed to have is close but does not count.....Where is the newest version 4.21 Pascal run time to all the loading and running of standard pascal software?

We have been promised these features in ads that sell the 9640 and we are still sitting here and waiting and waiting and waiting. The last date released by Myarc (officially as far as I know) was everything would be mailed out to users on the end of October... Well, here it is the middle of November and still again nothing...

Maybe some mail blitz to Myarc will do some good, what do you think??? I think it is time for the buyers of the 9640 to start taking some action on ther own and maybe we can get something done. The address for Myarc in case you do not have it is:

MYARC, INC.
P.O. BOX 140
BASKING RIDGE, NEW JERSEY 07920
PHONE: (201) 766-1700

I am going to carry on a crusade on my BBS. If you have any comments, suggestions, ideas, please call my BBS at: PC-Pursuit (202) 292-1482 or Non PC/Pursuit (301)292-1482. If I get enough responses on my BBS, I will do my best to get the msgs onto a file and see what I can do about getting them on the services (that is: GEnie, Delphi, Compuserve). If I get enough response, I will also make a file out of the responses and mail them myself to Lou Phillips directly!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Please do not get me wrong on the above comments. I personally think that theGeneve 9640 has tremendous potential as a computer. I bought the 9640 with the idea of having the compatablility of the 4A programs which I have been totally satisfied with. There are a few problems (for example, Plato) that do not run on the 9640 but I am sure that sometime in the future even this will be straightened out.

I enjoy the speed of the 9640. I enjoy the MyWord program, which I am using at this very moment for this file. I like the M-DOS 99B. Even though it is not what was promised, it is close!!! I enjoy the compatibility of the 9640 with the Gram Kracker files and the ability to convert my modules to disk. I have not personally used the multiplan feature but have heard comments from users that have. I enjoy the built in Ram disk feature.

What I am trying to say in this comment is, I want what I paid for!!!! Not promises and more promises!!! Not release date after release date and none of them being met. I want the full!!! potential of the 9640::::::

The following comments are as a sysop of a BBS on the subject of the 9640.

I have approximately 25 9640 owners on my BBS at the moment. I have been thanked personally by sysop msg for the availability of the files I have on the 9640 (MDOS, etc.) Many of them stating that if it was not for my BBS (and the national services) the 9640 would be gathering dust up in the closet. How does Myarc feel that they can treat the buyers of their products this way?? Is it the feeling they have that they got our money so the H--- with us???? I am speaking as a sysop of a fairly popular BBS and I can tell you that just about 100% of the 9640 owners are disgusted!!!! I refuse to spread any more rumors on release dates that I either recieve from users or suposedly from Myarc. I am tired of getting my users (and mine) hopes up anymore. I think it is time to take some kind of action!!!!!!!!!!

I have many users on the BBS that are potential owners, but are sitting there reading the msg base and seeing these delays after delays and wondering, should I put $500.00 into this machine??? I can't blame them. The longer the delay the more I think the market for the 9640 is going to go down.

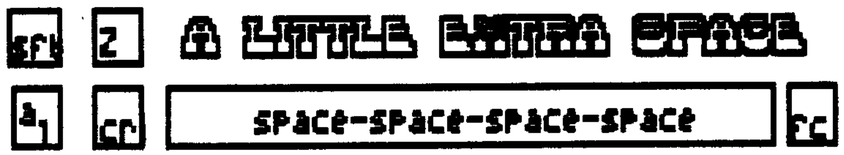
(This is my personal feeling on one aspect of the delay) MyArk (with mouse) had been released and is being sold thru Myarc. Why doesn't Myarc get the things done that need

to be done for the 9640 before going on to other projects? Is it because they already have your money $$$ for the 9640 and now they want more????? I saw the Myarc demonstrated at the TI faire here in Virginia and was very impressed with it, but I will be d----- if I'm going to lay any more money out until I get what I'm supposed to have for the 9640.

From the rumors and scuttlebutt from users, Myarc is not releasing any info to 3rd party programmers so that we may also see some beginnings of programs for the 9640.

Does Myarc want to go the same route that the 4A went with Texas Instruments??? Come on somebody!!!! Wake up!!!!!!!!! (- (9) exclamation points)

Well users, I'm sorry that this file had to be writen but as I said I think something has to be done and done soon.. Thanking you all for your time, Bob, Sysop of BBBB in Clinton, MD PC Pursuit number (202)292-1482. Non-PC Pursuit (301)292-1482.

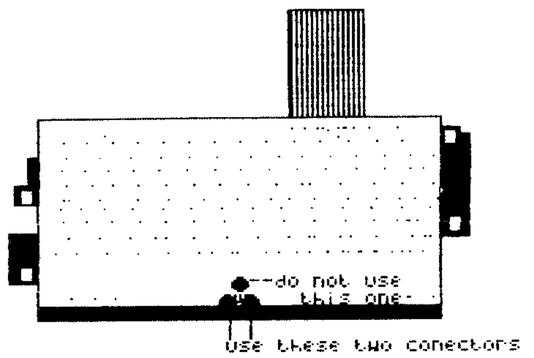


DANNY GOLDSTEIN

Somehow or another, the spacebar always seems to get in the way of TI Artist. But I've figured out a simple way to get around this problem. For instance, nearly the whole program is run by the joystick-that is, except for the spacebar. But, as I said, I've changed that, simply by adding another button to the joystick. A third button, which I've devised, can solve this, quite easily. All it took was two wires, as long as your joystick wire, and about five inches more, a momentery on switch(like used on your joystick), and a little tape. Just solder the wires onto the two ports[as shown on the picture] that are located directly under the spacebar. Then feed the wire out through the port that the joystick is connected, and up to the joystick. You may wish to tape the wire to the joystick wire with the other wire, to keep them together. Then solder the wire to your switch, and tape to your joystick in a comfortable position. It is quite simple, and can be done in a few minutes. You can do it yourself, or I can do it for you. Just contact Carole Goldstein, the writer of this newsletter, or the sysop, Irwin Goldstein.

Thanks,

Danny Goldstein



The Basic Assembler:

By Steve Peacock

T H E B A S I C A S S E M B L E R #13 By Steve Peacock

GOSUB WITH RETURN

This month we will see how to use a gosub with return. The program sets up some data and messages to print at the start. After this the key scan is used (KSCAN). In the main loop we check first to see if a key is pressed. This is done by compare ones corresponding, (COC). Hex 837C is the status byte. If a key has been pressed then bit 2 is set. If no key pressed it is not set. This status byte is compared to >2000 (00100000 d). This is like the basic coding 150 CALL KEY(0,K,S)::IF S=0 THEN 150.

If a key has been pressed then put the ASCII code in register one. A comparison is then made, ex. CI R1,49. If register 1 does not equal 49 then go to the next comparison, if equal then branch and load to the subprogram.

If any key pressed, that has not been set up, to compare, then go back to the main loop. After a valid key press is detected the program goes to the proper place and executes the subprogram. It will then return using the RT command.

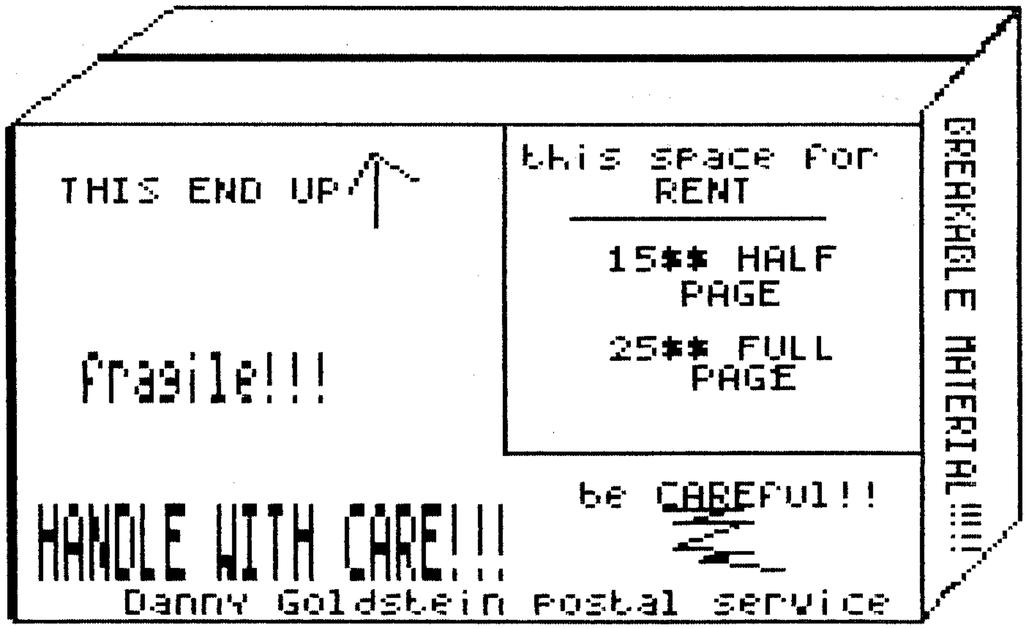
The coding of this months Basic Assembler can ONLY be used if you DO NOT auto run your program!

```
############################################################################################
100 REM PROGRAM BA13B-->Basic Assembler #13 BASIC Version
110 REM GOSUB WITH RETURN
120 REM (C)1986 S. PEACOCK
130 REM YOU MAY WANT A 'CALL CLEAR' HERE
140 MAIN$="PRESS KEY 1, 2, OR 3"
150 MESG1$="THIS IS #1 SUB-PROGRAM"
160 MESG2$="THIS IS #2 SUB-PROGRAM"
170 MESG3$="THIS IS #3 SUB-PROGRAM"
180 DISPLAY AT(2,4):MAIN$
190 CALL KEY(0,K,S)
200 IF S=0 THEN 190
210 IF K=49 THEN GOSUB 250
220 IF K=50 THEN GOSUB 270
230 IF K=51 THEN GOSUB 290
240 GOTO 190
250 DISPLAY AT(5,2):MESG1$
260 RETURN
270 DISPLAY AT(5,2):MESG2$
280 RETURN
290 DISPLAY AT(5,2):MESG3$
300 RETURN
310 END

############################################################################################

********************************************************************************************
```

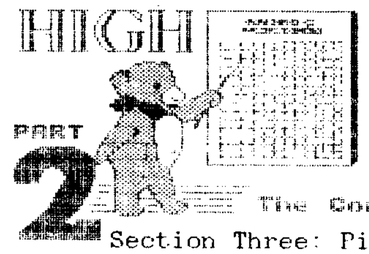


```
*
*PROGRAM BA13A-->Basic Assembler #13 Assembly Version
*GOSUB WITH RETURN
*(C)1986 S. PEACOCK
*
********************************************************************************
       REF  KSCAN,VMBW
       DEF  START
NOKEY  DATA >2000        *DATA TO COMPARE IF NO KEY IS PRESSED
MAIN   TEXT 'PRESS KEY 1, 2, OR 3'     *THE
MESG1  TEXT 'THIS IS #1 SUB-PROGRAM'   *MESSAGES
MESG2  TEXT 'THIS IS #2 SUB-PROGRAM'   *TO
MESG3  TEXT 'THIS IS #3 SUB-PROGRAM'   *PRINT
**************************
START  LI   R0,35        *PRINT MAIN MESSAGE
       LI   R1,MAIN      *AT POSITION 35
       LI   R2,20        *
       BLWP @VMBW        *
****************************************
       CLR  @>8374       *SET UP KEY SCAN
       CLR  R0
       CLR  R1
LOOP   BLWP @KSCAN       *KEY BOARD SCAN
       MOVB @>837C,R1    *>837C IS THE STATUS BYTE. IF A KEY IS PRESSED BIT 2
       COC  @NOKEY,R1    *IS SET. IT IS COMPARED TO >2000 (00100000b). IF
       LIMI 2            *EQUAL A KEY HAS BEEN PRESSED.
       LIMI 0
       JNE  LOOP         *IF NOT EQUAL NO KEY PRESSED, GO BACK TO LOOP.
       MOV  @>8375,R1    *PUT THE ASCII CODE OF THE KEY PRESSED IN REG. 1
**************************
       CI   R1,49        *REG. 1 HAS THE ASCII CODE OF THE PRESSED KEY
**************************IT IS COMPARED TO 49 (1)
       JNE  NEXT1        *IF NOT EQUAL GO TO NEXT COMPARISON
       BL   @SUB1        *IF EQUAL BRANCH TO SUB1
**************************
NEXT1  CI   R1,50        *COMPARE TO 50 (2)
       JNE  NEXT2        *SAME AS ABOVE
       BL   @SUB2
**************************
NEXT2  CI   R1,51        *COMPARE TO 51 (3)
       JNE  NEXT3        *SAME AS ABOVE
       BL   @SUB3
NEXT3  JMP  LOOP         *IF ANY KEY OTHER THAN 1, 2, OR 3 PRESSED, GO BACK
**************************TO LOOP
********************************************************************************
***THE BELOW SUBPROGRAMS WILL PRINT A MESSAGE ON THE SCREEN. ANY OTHER
***SUBPROGRAM COULD HAVE BEEN USED, MUSIC, CHECK FOR COLLISION OF SPRITES ETC.
********************************************************************************
SUB1   LI   R0,129       *'GOSUB #1'
       LI   R1,MESG1
       LI   R2,22
       BLWP @VMBW
       CLR  R0           *SETS UP TO RETURN
       MOVB R0,@>837C    *PUTS STATUS BYTE IN REG. 0
       RT                *RETURN
**************************THE ABOVE THREE LINES ARE USED AS A RETURN.
SUB2   LI   R0,129       *'GOSUB #2'
       LI   R1,MESG2
```

```
       LI   R2,22
       BLWP @VMBW
       CLR  R0             *SAME
       MOVB R0,@>837C
       RT
*************************
SUB3   LI   R0,129         *'GOSUB #3'
       LI   R1,MESG3
       LI   R2,22
       BLWP @VMBW
       CLR  R0             *SAME
       MOVB R0,@>837C
       RT
*******************************************************************************
*THE ABOVE GOSUB/RETURN CAN ONLY BE USED IF YOU DO NOT AUTO RUN YOUR PROGRAM*
*******************************************************************************
       END
```



Danny
Goldstein



By Anne Dhein

Section Three: Picture Storage, Color, and Unique Features

Scratchpad Memory - Most drawing packages have provisions for setting aside part of a picture and later adding it to another picture. This "scratchpad" memory can be handled in two ways: by saving a permanent version of the clipped picture onto a disk which you can reload as needed; or by storing the picture-part in intermediate memory where you can recall it when you need it, even though you have loaded new picture files in and out of the program since the picture part was saved.

When this type of picture-part is saved to a disk it should not be confused with a regular picture file. When a picture file is loaded into your program, whatever you had on the screen before is erased and gone, and the new picture takes its place. Picture-parts, however, are loaded IN ADDITION to whatever else is already there. These small pictures have become very popular with the drawing community so that they have their own special term - clipart.

Each program is unique in its handling of this additional storage. Joy Paint uses internal storage for a Cut and Paste method much like the paint programs for other popular computers do. All screens are saved in the same format. When something is wanted from another picture, save the current picture first, then load in the picture to be borrowed from. "Cut" out the piece you wish to use. Reload the original picture and "Paste" the new part any where on the drawing.

Bitmac uses the "Store" function for internal temporary storage. Current screen graphics can be overlaid with graphics stored on a disk, using what is called "Boolean Input". This allows special graphics effects which are unique to Bitmac.

TI Artist also has unique storage methods. Besides the normal full screen picture files, parts of pictures can be saved as "instances" or "slides". Slides are a collection of up to 24 miniture designs that can be independently designed, rotated, and moved around on your drawing. Instances are images that can be added to your drawings or combined together in whatever manner you wish. They can become a permanent, editable part of your drawing. The nice thing about instances is that they are saved in a DISPLAY VARIABLE 80 format which can easily be transported to Extended Basic programs or TI Writer files as well as being used for clipart.

Graphx has a very powerful "Clipboard" feature. With it you can create and store clipart permanently on a disk and it is also possible to copy a portion of one picture into another, much like Cut and Paste. A portion of a picture, or even several pictures, can be stored, then decided on later at to which ones to keep and which ones to erase.

Use of Color
In the high resolution mode each graphic position available to be used

on our electronic drawing board is called a pixel. You may remember being told that the screen is like a grid with 256 pixels across and 192 pixel rows; and that each individual pixel on the screen can be turned off or on separately while you are drawing - all 49,152 of them! Right? Wrong, if you are using color!

Color resolution for the 99/4A is not the same as drawing resolution. We still have the same 192 rows of pixels, but instead of 256 pixels across, we have only 32 graphic positions across each row. Each row of pixels is grouped in eights, starting from the left of the screen, and each set must be the same two colors - a foreground and a background.

The foreground is the color assigned to the brush or pencil line in each eight-pixel group. The background is the color assigned to those same eight pixels when the pencil is not used. When you first begin using the drawing board, all of the eight-pixel groups have been assigned the same two colors. The color you see before you begin drawing is your background, and, of course, the pencil line is your foreground color. You may also see a third color in the form of a border around the perimeter of the screen. This is the screen color. If you don't see it, that means the screen has been assigned the same color as the background.

Now you can see why color resolution is 64 X 192 instead of the drawing resolution of 256 X 192. Any given group of eight horizontal pixels MUST be the same two colors. The groups on either side can carry entirely different colors, but each group is limited to two colors. Knowing this, and arranging your drawings according to the color boundaries is important when working with color.

Most programs make full use of the 99/4A's 15 brilliant colors, allowing control over the foreground and background colors, and in many programs over the screen color as well. Sometimes the screen color is called the "backdrop".

All programs using color allow the swapping of one color in a drawing for any other. When the exchange takes place, every incidence of that color on the screen is swapped for the new one. Additionally, some programs like TI Artist and Graphx allow selective repainting of a chosen area.

Some of the programs provide special helps for working with color. TI Artist provides a function that lets a special color cursor move on color boundaries. Graphx does the same; also providing a "Grey and White Checkerboard" function which is handy for planning drawings which will use a lot of different colors. This makes it much easier to plan the various colors in your picture so that they don't bump into each other. When you no longer need the grid simply choose the "Remove Grey Boxes" option.

For special color effects, two programs that shine are Draw-A-Bit with its Redraw feature described elsewhere, and Paint 'N Print which includes five extra rainbow colors in varying widths of horizontal and vertical stripes. Draw 'N Plot makes limited use of color. Only two are used at any one time - foreground and background. These colors can be easily switched so you can see how the various combinations of color look together.

Besides the Graphic Package, which doesn't use color either, Joy Paint is the only major paint program not using color. Here the emphasis is on the manipulating of picture components, and color is used only as a background, with the pencil line alway being your choice of either black or white. Painting refers to filling shapes with the many patterns available, or using the air brush to "spray paint" an area with a chosen pattern.

A Slide Show is a method of presenting pictures in a selected order. Bitmac is the only program with this feature built in; Draw A Bit and Draw 'N Plot have disk demos that you can adapt for your own pictures. TI Artist has an excellent companion disk called Display Master that gives you many options in designing your own slide display. Asgard Software puts out a slide show program for Graphx files.

The Undo command lets you "take back" the last step of a drawing. If something was moved or erased that shouldn't have been, no harm done, just "undo" it. Joy Paint is the 99/4A's only program with this feature but it is quite common in paint programs for other computers.

Like Undo, each program has special features not shared by the others. If you are in the market for a new paint program, one of these might be just the feature you were wishing you could find. For instance, Joy Paint has a drawing area that is actually 92% larger than the screen. To see the rest of the drawing board, the screen is used as a window, and can be moved from side to side or up and down. When the screen dump program is used the whole area, not just what is visible on the screen, is printed.

Do you have a second computer that you have wished you could tie in to your 99/4A? The Bitmac software will let you do just this. When the coprocessor function is in effect, the other computer (not necessarily a TI) can manipulate data while the 99/4A is processing elaborate graphics from that data.

Bitmac has a Cursor Report feature which can be turned on or off as desired. It keeps track of the actual pixel location of the cursor. The program also lets you scroll your picture one pixel at a time to the right or left, up or down on the screen. This is handy for getting a drawing onto color boundaries, and also for special effects using the Boolean imputs AND, OR, and XOR.

The TI Artist instance file was already mentioned above as being excellent additional storage for clipart, because these files can be added so easily to any picture you are currently working on. The instance file is invaluable for using as a vehicle to transport your artwork to other mediums. Many support programs have been built around the ability of these instances to be so easily used, including Font Writer (Asgard), Art Convert (Trio+) and Character Sets and Graphic Design III (Texaments).

Besides being used for planning color in drawings, the unique grey box function in Graphx can be used for designing schematics and other precision drawings which require precise measuring.

The Graphx clipboard also lets you experiment with computer animation. If you store the appropriate images on the clipboard you can create short, animated sequences which you can display against a background of

your normal Graphx pictures.

Like the Norton Graphics Package, Draw N Plot is primarily a programmer's tool. Unlike the Graphics package however, Draw 'N Plot has a very nice, full-featured drawing board. Also, the routines in Draw 'N Plot are in assembly language which considerably speeds up operations. Draw 'N Plot makes an excellent program to design your own Extended Basic programs around; however, memory can be a problem.

Draw A Bit is really a full-scale programmer's tool too, but the programmer must be somewhat conversant in assembly language as well as Extended Basic to use it with his own programs.

As you work in the Draw A Bit environment, your picture is automatically saved for you in intermediate memory. Any time you ish you may clear the screen and with the push of the right keys, redraw the picture, line for line. This is a fascinating procedure to watch. Pictures may also be saved in this Draw mode if desired. Also interesting to use is the Connect-Dots option. This is like a line function except that you plot all your dots first; then the lines appear when you are ready for them.

Built right into Paint 'N Print is a font editor that will let you easily change the shape of the resident alphabet. The companion disk additionally allows editing of the texture character for all sorts of special textural effects.

Paint 'N Print is the only drawing package which allows a screen dump to be in color, providing you have the right printer (the Axiom GP 700).

Super Sketch is the only program that includes a touch tablet. This graphics tablet, although deceptively simple looking, is a precision tool that accepts commands through a control arm which determines screen position. The control arm moves the pointer (your pen) around the tablet, and the computer keeps track of where this pointer is at all times. In this manner, any picture placed on the tablet can be traced onto the screen. The device is so simple that even a child can use it easily.

The Artist Extras package from Inscebot allows the use of the Super Sketch touch tablet with TI Artist. When used this way, the tablet becomes an integral part of the TI Artist program and the is used in place of a joystick or trackball to allow designed traced with the tablet to appear on the screen.

Part 2 is concluded in the next issue with a closer look at printers and screen dumps, file management, and additional support packages.

STATIC OUCH.

By Dennis Hathaway

Fall is here, winter is just around the corner.
With winter comes low temperatures and extremely low Relative Humidity (RH). Low RH presents us with the problem of dealing with very high levels of static electricity. So it is timely for a discussion on static. What is static, what can it do to our hardware, and what precautions can we take to reduce problems.

First, what is it. Every person, animal, plane, truck, auto, etc. carries with them an electrostatic charge (Q), except when they (or it) are in direct contact with a conductive path to ground. We accumulate this charge as we move around, for example walking on a carpet, touching things (or beings) that carry a charge greater than ours, the rubbing together of our items of clothing (especially clothing of man-made materials), even the friction of air flowing past us.
Depending on the materials involved we can become charged either positive or negative with respect to ground. When we touch something with a different level of charge we often feel a sharp tingle, or minute burn (oddly enough, we don't usually feel anything if the potential is less than 2300 volts, because then the total static power involved is small). This sensation is caused by the discharge of the static we were carrying, or to give it it's full name ElectroStatic Discharge(ESD). More on ESD later.

The charge we carry (Q) is given by Q = CV, where Q is in coulombs, C is in microfarads, and V is in volts. For a human being C is usually around 100 to 250 picofarads, depending mainly on overall bulk, size of feet, and type of footware. Because womens shoes usually have thin soles, their capacity (C) is often higher than that of a man. Typically Q ranges up to 5 microcoulombs.

A calculation will show that a person whose Q = 3 microcoulombs and whose C = 200 picofarads will be at 15 KV with respect to ground (where 1 KV = 1000 volts).

This voltage can in extreme cases be as high as 40 KV. Beyond this point the charge will bleed off through the air, and may sometimes even form a corona. The drier the air, the less is the bleed off effect and this is why we should be concerned when the RH is low.
In upper Wisconsin during the fall of a few years ago, using a grounded electrostatic meter, I measured 23 KV on a man walking towards me over a vinyl tiled floor, while he was wearing crepe soled shoes. At the same location, the plastic cover on a notice board was at 45 KV. Even allowing for meter inaccuracies this still gives an indication of the level of voltages out there at this time of year.
We must not let this cause us to think that we generate static only when the RH is low. This is not the case. We generate static ALL YEAR LONG, but when the RH is higher the charge bleeds away more readily.

I am sure that all of us have at some time touched the screen of our monitor/TV while working at the keyboard, and have heard the air crackling as we became charged to some 12 to 15 KV. When we next touched the keyboard we partially discharged into the console. TI were fully aware of this problem when they designed the 99/4A, and have almost certainly taken suitable precautions to prevent damage to the console when we zapped it in this way.

Now what can happen to our equipment if we pass our charge to it in a manner TI did not anticipate?
Actually we share our charge with the equipment, until both we and it are at an equal potential, then current flow ceases. In practice a typical discharge is found to be somewhere in the order of 20 millijoules (where a joule is 1 watt/second). Now when we discharge into our equipment it takes place very rapidly, depending on our capacitance C, and our skin resistance (usually around 1000 ohms). The effect is such that we can be feeding some 20 amps into the equipment for a period of some 100 nanoseconds. If we do this to the connector contacts on a module, or on one of our PEB cards we will cause damage to them. In some cases it will be obvious when a device is destroyed because the system quits. Usually however we end up with a device that is only partially damaged. The device is then known as being among the "walking wounded". It carries on working , but is likely to die on us at any time, maybe weeks later when we have completely forgotten that we previously zapped it with 20 millijoules.
It is general knowledge that MOS devices used in many TI assemblies are susceptable to this kind of harsh treatment, but it must be realized that bipolar transistors, diodes, and other devices are also affected similarly, but to a somewhat lesser degree.
Incidentally, those of us who attended the TI Faire probably witnessed some PC boards being "wounded" both by vendors and buyers. Good luck guys!

How do we prevent static damage to our 99/4A? As we are about to sit down at our terminal we should bear in mind that every item around us has some capacity to ground, so by touching them briefly we share our charge with them. Do this to a couple of items (preferably large metallic ones) like a chair, or a filing cabinet, etc. Personally I use an exposed screw head on my grounded AC power distribution expansion strip which sits on top of my PE box.
If we are working on a printed circuit(PC) board outside of our PEB, or of our printer then a more elaborate method is needed. Consider, while sitting at the bench/table we may raise our potential by as much as 1000 volts each time we reach out to pick up a tool or device. An aid known as a wrist strap will help here. A conductive band goes on the wrist, and is connected via a 1.5 Megohm resistor to ground. This continuously bleeds away any static as fast as we generate it. The resistor limits current if we accidentally touch something with mains potential on it. These wrist straps are available from most electronic parts vendors for only a few dollars.

While the above discussion is directed to work on the 99/4A, it applies equally to other electronic items - radio, TV, VCR, etc. Static can ruin most electronic equipment

It would be well to ensure that ones spouse and children are made aware of this static problem, so they will not nullify our efforts to prevent damage to our equipment.

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We noted earlier that when a static charge is passed from one body to another, a current flow occurs that is initiated by a breakdown of the air as we approach the object, and this creates a spark (which we can observe in a darkened room). This current flow is what we now know as ESD. There are other forms of ESD that create sparks of much greater magnitude. For example, lightning is a discharge of the static built up within the clouds. It may be of interest to the reader that bolts of lightning can pass current in the order of 80,000 amps, though the average stroke is around 17,000 amps. This of course is happening when the RH is very high, often 100%, quite contrary to the situation discussed earlier in this article.
Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on your viewpoint) TI Writer does not readily lend itself to the production of mathematical formulae, so this article will leave it to the reader to confirm calculations at their leisure. It will suffice here to say that due to the inductive reactance of the path taken by the current to ground there are some extremely high voltages produced by a lightning strike. We must realize that while the ohmic resistance of a length of cable may be very low (say 0.01 ohm) its impedance to a 2 nanosecond lighning pulse may be thousands of ohms, and the high voltage appears across this impedance. Power lines, telephone lines etc. may be hit by lightning, so that voltages in the order of hundreds of thousands of volts with respect to ground may appear. The insulation of household wiring breaks down at around 6000 volts, so we can be reasonably sure that we will not encounter anything greater than this on our equipment. However 6000 volts will kill our 99/4A (or us), so it is wise to abstain from using the system when there is a storm in the area.

When a large industrial motor is turned off, it injects a voltage spike onto te power line. While the power utility uses primary surge arresters to limit this surge, it is often found that a spike of up to 1500 volts between line and neutral appear at our premises. This spike is so brief that it is not usually noticed on our house lights, but our 99/4A power supply will see it, and may pass it on to our system. It is therefore advisable to have a suitable surge arrester in series with the AC feed to our system. This will pass the spike harmlessly to ground.

An additional problem that can arise, is that ESD can cause some strange program quirks that leave us bewildered for hours. When ESD happens, the current flow produces a magnetic field, known as an Electro Magnetic Pulse (EMP), and if this invades our system with sufficient intensity, the resultant voltages induced into our system as the EMP traverses cables and PC board artwork, may alter the state of one or more bits in RAM, and we all know what this can do to a program.

To summarize, we have seen how man-made static can cause damage almost as disastrously as Mother Natures lightning, but how with a few relativvely simple safeguards we can avoid trouble.

FANNY'S FOLLIES: By Fanny Flannery

Dateline: Chicago, 7 Nov.,87. The Queen Mother hosts it's 5th annual TI faire. Yes ladies and gentlemen, the Chicago TI User Group has done it again. The Queen Mother of TI faires has once again shown the TI community how to put on a TI faire. And I for one am glad I was there.

Although attendance was down from previous years, faire goers came to buy and buy some more. The only sad faces in the room were on the people that came too late. These people were told their orders would have to be shipped to them. The reasons for this years mass merchandising were brought about by the presents of hardware and software that would blow your socks off. As this reporter moved from table to table, I was amazed by the quality of products being made for this dead computer resurrected to life.

This reporter witnessed people buying in a frenzy before products were all gone. It looked as though Santa has really come early to the TI world this year. Hardware that topped the list this year included RGB monitors, Myarc's Myart with mouse and Horizon Ram Disks that came in sizes from 182K to 1 Megabyte. Software sales were up as crowds gathered to buy the latest graphic packages and IBM compatible material.

This years guest speakers included well knowns like Jack Riley, Peter Hoddie and shut my mouth, Barb Wiederhold from Queen Ann Computer Shoppe in Seattle. Now this is a cute little dearie that really knows how to modulate a microphone. Besides that, she's got her stuff together when it comes to the 4A or the 9640.

This years faire was coordinated by "Dandy" Don Jones and his ever faithful assistant Marcy "the Merciless" Brun who seemed to have an eyelock on most of the men all day long. At times it seemed like some attendees really came to see the 3 M's. Myart, MDOS and Marcy. That affected this reporter in no way. Matter of fact, it gave me more time to circulate amoung the crowd unnoticed.

Bud Mills was ever present with his cute little handlebar mustache. He also had his "knock your socks off" 1 megabyte HRD+ ramdisk. What's a girl to do without one? That cute little Peter Hoddie just made my toes curl when he looked at me with his cute little boy eyes. Peter and his Genial Computerware were very popular with 4 new program releases that were awe-some. Totally awe-some. Chris Bobitt of Asgard can definately nudge me in the morning any time he wants. Barb Wiederhold, who flew all the way in from Seattle, was seen resting her arms after the long flight. Barb had a lot to say, as always, about the 9640 and it's support. It is an ever growing popular machine. But not to look back at or forget about the 99/4A. This machine has been known to be the backbone of the user group and their faire. This reporter has heard mixed feelings about the presents of the 9640. It would seem that after 2 years of vaporware, the crowds would be pleased to see a totally working model. An end product at that. I got mixed reviews as I talked to faire goers. Most were happy to see a working 9640 finally make it to the show. Others seemed quite worried the support for the 4A would now start to die away.

This reporter paid her dues and attended the Friday night Social Mixer. A crowd of 100+ people attended and enjoyed the buffet style snack table and cash bar. The highlight of the evening was the panel discussion. The panel was made up of Jack Riley, Barb Wiederhold, Chris Bobitt, Dave "the Psycho" Wakely, Todd "I'm not related to Gary" Kaplan and Franz Wagenbach. A discussion ensued about the present and future of the 99/4A. It was felt that may new products have been and will be released for the machine. The TI and it's owners must be supported. All seems well for the future of our machine. I personally think that groups like the Chicago one will keep this machine alive for as long as possible. The Mixer seemed to go quite well. It was a good time for people to get to know one another and exchange information. By the way, that cute little Canadian I was talking to, my address is 915 not 951 Hawthorn Ln.

All in all, this reporter proclaims the Chicago Faire as a hugh success. I think everyone had a good time. Even the workers that seemed to be busy all day. My only regret was I did NOT get to hear "Dandy" Don sing Turn out the Lights at faire's end. That's how I saw it, Good Day!

CONTINUED FROM LAST PAGE

Also, I purchased 100 diskettes from CBUG in four packages of 25 each. One of the packages contained disks with 11 index holes. These turned out to be hard sector disks. No problem again, CBUG was aware of the problem and will replace them. But I wanted people to realize that if you bought disks from this source and you are having problems initializing your new disks, it is not your disk drive that is at fault.

Special thanks to Rich Klein and Gary Cox who wubmitted the pictures for this issue. Gary sent his all the way from Memphis, Tenn.

Please note that we have a new contributer. Welcome the article by Fanny Flannery. I hope we will be hearing more from her.

In closing, I want to remind you, if you haven't done so, to renew your membership at this meeting. Late renewals will not be provided with free copies of back issues of the newsletter. You will have to buy any issues you miss by renewing late.

Again, thanks to everyone who helped make this years Faire such a special event. Tapes are available though the group. See you at the meeting.

(NOTE) Just before going to press, I received the updated version of Print Wizard from Trio + Software.

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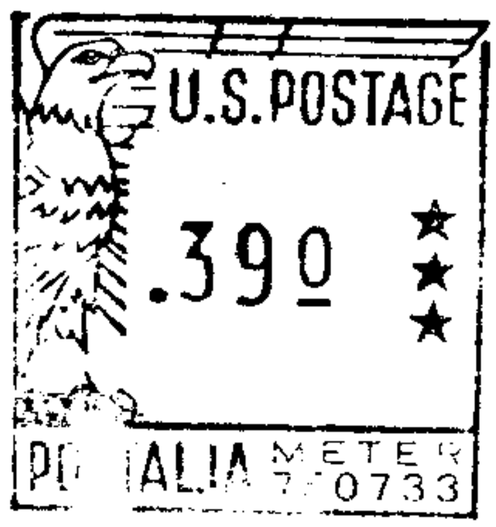

REMARKS

Carole Goldstein

Well, here it is the end of another newsletter. This one was done the old fashion way. Thanks to the 9640 that decided to give out. It's on it's wa back to Myarc for exchange and I will let you all know how long that takes and if we get a better functioning unit the second time around.

Most of this issue, like the previous issue, is devoted to the Faire. It's still high on everyone's mind. It was a GREAT Faire this year as in the past. There are a couple of comments I wanted to make concerning some of the vendors. Not only are TI users some of the best people around, but we can say the same about some of the vendors.

One of the items I purchased at the Faire was Print Wizard by TRIO Software. I have felt the TI lacked a Print-Shop-like program for a long time. I have been looking for one for years. When I started playing with it I found it exceptionally easy to use and I was pleased. However, when I went to print, it ceased to function. We called TRIO the next day and received a return call from the programmer herself who said that the program had been written to work on a Proprinter. They did not anticipate the problems porting to other printers. She explained how to go about changing it to make it work. When I tried it, I found that now it would print but not to the proper size. I did not get the chance to call back when I received a letter from Trio stating that they were aware of the problem still, and working to correct it. No further communication on my part would be necessary. They will send me a new disk as soon as the problem is corrected. Meanwhile at any time, if I felt I wanted it, I could have a complete refund. Now that is a reputable company.

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